GUIDE TO INTERVIEWS

PRINCIPLES OF SELECTION AND INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES FOR PUBLIC SERVICES IN INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

SERVICE NOT sex is the primary charm of life for a freshly turned out graduate of an Indian University A job is essential for his emotional security social recognition and a struggle free existence for the rest of the life. When a job is in hand, the society provides the mate also Our universities have yet to produce youngmen and women endowed with a conquerer's vision and drive and an ambition to live an adventurous independent life. Their general education has not prepared them for a specific role in life nor has the state—as in U.S.S.R. —or the society—as in U.S.A. U.K. etc —a job waiting for them on graduation. A consciousness of the grim reality of the acute form of educated unemployment existing in this country saps their self-confidence and undermines the prospects of proper integration of their personality during college days. They may be intellectually brilliant and nimble-witted but deep down their personality lies a feeling of insecurity pessimism leading to a cynical outlook in life. Under such faulty individuation and hostile social climate any idea of an independent career without sufficient financial backing looks like an invitation to disaster

Service then offers the only prospects of deliverance from this gloomy future. Thanks to the growth of a powerful opinion more and more of the big and small jobs in public services and the private enterprise are being filled through open channels—Upwards of 10,000 jobs are filled annually in this way These channels generally consist of written tests followed by personality evaluation tests and interviews.

The present publication concerns primarily with the second and the most important part of employment technique. Training in theoretical subjects is amply provided in colleges. But facilities for training for interviews or personality evaluation tests is not available either in colleges or in the homes. There are three main types of careers that bright, hard-w

youngsters with general education can look for They are (a) the Defence Services (b) the I.A.S I.F.S and other Class I jobs at the Centre and in the States and (c) the Covenented and other jobs with Big Business Houses in India. Each of these types of careers require people of different age-groups quali fications and personality structures. Therefore before one tries to prepare for any type of career he or she must study the personality requirements of the job

It is precisely for this reason that the first part of this book deals with the *Principles of Selection and Personality Requirements* for public services in India. The people throwing light on these aspects are specialists in field and men in responsible positions who have actually laid down the criteria for various public services and their actual mode of filling up They are Mr R C. Dutt, I C S. Mr S B Bapat, I C.S Mr K. N Butani Mr C. Rajgopalachari Dr J L Khanna Mr A.A.A. Fyzee, Mr Sohan Lall President, Services Selection Board and Sir T Vijayaraghavacharya.

I am indebted to Government of India Indian Institute of Public Administration for reprinting their papers from their journal. After understanding the standards laid down for the recruitment to various jobs we come down to the actual problems of interviews. Interviewing is not a simple question-answer business but a highly technical and specialised affair Insight into the significance of Interviews can be gained through the study of a scholarly discourse on the subject by my friend and colleague Dr J L. Khanna, now working as a research psychologist in Kansas University U S A. The extensive bibliography at the end will reveal its wide sweep and also serve as a guide for further study

The Chapter on 'Interview Techniques" deals exhaustively with the various types of selection interviews held in our country and abroad. In order that a reader might gain a further understanding of the subjects the various result recording techniques and even the sequence of different stages of an inter view is given. The chapters that follow deal exclusively in

successful facing of an Interview boards. These three chapters must be so throughly mastered by a prospective candidate that they form a part of his well digested personal knowledge This would inspire self-confidence, and give them the necessary poise-sure footedness. Above all, they would be saved from the *trauma of facing the unknown* from which very few people facing the Interview Board have escaped.

In conclusion I must express my sincerest thanks to my friend Sardar Manmohan Singh for his *unfailing help* and co-operation in the production and distribution arrangements of this volume. I am also indebted to Shri Kailash Chandra Jhalani and Shri K. Ramamoorthy for their valuable help in the production of this publication.

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November 1957

Joginder Singh

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PRINCIPLES OF SELECTIO' TO PUBLIC SERVICES

by

R. C. DUTT I.C.S.,

Secretary Public Services Recruitment Comm..., Government of India

At the transfer of power in I... trative structure, well conceived a... bly depleted in personnel and ex... objectives. A two fold problem... The first problem was to fill in t... from within and partly by fresh r... to attune the Services to the new t... orientate their attitude to fit in w... was mainly a problem of selecti... training The former however ... latter Selection is not an abstra... only when it is related to certain o... Th. object of selection is not t... in an absolut sense but to select ... surroundings in which they have ... with the objectives in view can ... most efficiently

Independence brought in its ... of a magnitude not encountere... and order which immediately f... pendence, that of mass migratio... problem and a score of other pro... tackled with the available admir... nel Shortage in personnel had ... both from the lower grades and f... tion managed to successfully e... take a measure of welfare and d...

Five Year Plan was launched in 1951 This was a new experience for the administration. It involved not only an expansion of the administrative machinery but its incursion into fields hitherto unexplored New problems of selection arose Organisations had to be devised and personnel found for the new tasks.

The First Five Year Plan has been completed and the Second Plan, bolder in outlook and more thorough in comprehension than the first requires an expansion of personnel on a larger scale than the First Plan. It is equally obvious that on the manner in which this expansion takes place the success or otherwise of the Plan would depend. Selection of personnel will, therefore play a more important part than ever before. In dealing with this problem of selection for the Second Plan there is however one advantage that of experience. The period of survival from 1947 to 1951 and that of the First Plan 1951 56 have underlined the urgent need for proper selection and also helped us to develop the methods best suited for it. On the basis of this experience the principles of selection, particularly in the matter of promotion are being evolved. Should promotion in service depend on the more easily ascertainable factor of seniority ? Or should both these factors be combined in some given proportion to determine promotions from grade to grade ? These are the questions that this article seeks to examine.

Promotion in our public services derives its importance from two main sources (1) Promotion to higher grades determines the type of officers available for posts of responsibility in these grades and (2) it has a direct effect on the morale of the lower grades which, in turn, affects their efficiency

These two factors though not conflicting, often point in two different directions The principle of selective promotion can, therefore be evolved only by balancing all the considerations arising therefrom. From the point of view of the taxpayer it is essential that only the best are promoted to the highest

posts. Any deviation from this involves loss of efficiency and is therefore contrary to public interest. Two basic questions, however arise Who is the best ? On what criteria can the best be selected ?' To the extent that these questions are not satisfactorily answered or are not answered in a manner that is generally acknowledged as satisfactory the second of the two factors mentioned above assumes importance Nothing is more damaging to the morale of an officer than the feeling that he has been superseded for promotion to a higher post by a person *who cannot be regarded as superior* to him in merit. An officer superseded even once develops a feeling of frustration one superseded repeatedly does so to the extent that his own usefulness to the State is reduced rapidly This feeling of frustration is intensified by the normal psychological fact that few men are capable of so objective a self-assessment as to admit the superior merit of others Where the difference is so pronounced as to make its denial absurd, the fact may perhaps, be admitted, but the personal ego present in greater or less degree in almost all human beings militates against such admission except in the most extreme cases

In any scheme of selection on merit therefore, it is necessary to ensure not only that selections are made as objectively as possible but that the method of selection is such as to be generally regarded as objective and above suspicion It is not easy to ensure either of these for the assessment of merit on which selection is based cannot be divorced entirely from the subjective judgment of the person or persons who assess the merit.

Various methods have from time to time been considered and tried to make the process of selection as objective as possible. These may be classified broadly into two groups. The first relates to the materials on which the judgment is to be based, and the second to the selection of the person or persons called upon to form the judgment.

The materials most commonly used to form the basis of selection are ;

(i) the periodic assessment of character and performance recorded in the form of confidential reports

(ii) the impressions gathered in a direct interview to test personality and

(iii) a written test designed to judge ability to perform the duties allotted.

Each of these methods used to collect evidence of the suitability or otherwise has its limitations but the evidence so gathered, used discriminately and in combination can form the basis of reliable judgment.

The periodic recorded assessments of the work done, taken over a fairly long period of time present as good a picture of the capacity and even personality of a person as any that can be obtained. Such assessments do as indeed they must, reflect the varying personalities of the recording officers A number of them taken together however tend to cancel out these variations, and give a picture which is not far from the correct one. But for such a picture to emerge it is necessary that the assessments should be carefully designed forms of confidential reports.

While the resulting picture can be regarded as a sufficient likeness of the person concerned it is still too rough to permit precise and reliable comparisons between different candidates of about equal merit. For fine shades of distinction the pictures so drawn are not helpful. It is perhaps for this reason that in the United States a system of merit rating by allotment of marks has been evolved. Under this system, the desirable qualities are marked. The final grade of merit is determined on the basis of the total marks obtained. The system, however aims at scientific precision in a matter of judgment which being essentially subjective is not capable of such precise analysis The danger of the system lies in the false appearance of precision that it creates. Merit rating in the form of marks conceals the basis of the judgment, and thus prevents comparative evaluation of the assessments made by different authorities with different yardsticks To this extent it is a less reliable

guide for comparative purposes than assessments of merit in narrative form

The interview as a method of selection has a distinct advantage. It is the only method which enables the selector to assess directly the personality of the candidate. The assessments in the form of periodic reports if carefully drawn up, can help in this direction but they can at best provide a second hand picture The direct impression created by an interview on the other hand, gives reality to the picture and helps in forming a truer assessment. The interview system nevertheless, has the disadvantage that appearances can frequently be made to pass for reality Human personality is a complex phenomenon hardly capable of being analysed in course of an interview which, however elaborate, must necessarily be brief. A dominating trait, though superficial, may easily be mistaken for an essential quality It needs experienced and trained interviewers to isolate the substance from the appearance but provided such interviewers are available interview can be a very useful supplement to other methods of selection. It is unnecessary here to go into the various elaborations of the system of interview which have been devised in an attempt to make it an infallible method of selection. Psychiatric tests and the 'house party system are some of these devices They cannot, however be used in the day to-day administration for selection of service personnel. Nor are they really necessary so long as interview is regarded not as sole but only one of the methods of selection.

Finally there is the method of selection by written tests. Such tests do have their usefulness but only in restricted spheres. Where the duties of an officer are comparatively well-defined and capable of simple tests, written examinations can certainly help in the selection. Such examinations can test (a) the ability to perform certain given tasks *e. g.*, precis-writing, noting etc., (b) knowledge of facts and rules and (c) mental alertness and originality in thought. The last does indeed form the basic requirement for all responsible positions, but no system of examination yet devised can conclusively

indicate anything more than the quality of basic human material available The basic material has to be trained and moulding is not entirely predictable and no system of examination can vouch for the finished product. Nevertheless, within its limitation written examinations do constitute a useful method of selection

The problem of selecting the selectors is also an important one Certain principles in this respect can be said to have received general acceptance The first is that group judgment is preferable to individual judgment. The truth of this principle is obvious The second is that the group of selectors should as far as possible include persons independent of and detached from the organisation or office for which the selection is being made so that an objective view of comparative merit of the candidates can be taken. The group should also include persons familiar with the nature of work expected of the candidates selected so that the assessment of merit can be made on the basis of job requirements. Last of all, it need hardly be mentioned that persons who on grounds of relationship friendship or for other reasons, are likely to develop bias for or even against particular candidates, should take no part in their selection. In fact it is not only necessary that selection should be objective but also that it should be demonstrably so. The possibility of bias, even if there is none in reality should be regarded as sufficient to exclude a selector from the process of selection.

With all possible precautions to ensure objectivity assessment of merit remains essentially a matter of subjective judgment not capable of being fully determined by objective yardsticks Relative assessments of the same group of persons made by two different authorities both functioning under similar conditions and adopting the same methods are likely to differ They are also likely to differ even when made by the same selector but at two different points of time. It would be imprudent therefore to rely solely on what is regarded as merit in the matter of selection.

That does not mean that selection on merit should be abandoned, and promotions made on the rigid formula of seniority or length of service. Length of service as representing experience determines to some extent the usefulness of a person to the State. It is one of the factors which determines merit itself It also happens to be a factor assessable objectively and intelligible to everybody Promotion by seniority is therefore a "safe method which is likely to cause the least resentment. It however provides no incentive for work of merit, nor does it ensure that posts requiring initiative and imagination of a high order are in fact held by persons having these qualities. A rigid adherence to a seniority formula would, therefore deprive the taxpayer of the quality of service to which he is entitled and in the last analysis prove to be expensive A progressive State committed to a dynamic development administration can ill afford to do without the services of the best available persons. It cannot remain content with mediocrities in pursuance of a safe" system of promotion by seniority

A judicious combination of seniority and merit with emphasis on the latter is therefore, what is required. In all organisations employees can be divided broadly into three groups : (a) a small group of really outstanding persons (b) a sizable group of persons well below the average; and (c) a comparatively large group of persons who are neither outstan ding nor unfit, consisting of men and women of various shades of ability There is no difficulty in any reasonably sound system of merit selection about locat ng persons in groups (a) and (b) Outstanding persons are readily recognised as such and their advancement out of turn should cause no general resentment. Persons well below average are also easily recognizable and no arguments need arise if such persons are superseded. Difficulty arises mostly about the *intermediate category* i. e group (c) which comprises the largest number of employees. It is in assessing their *relative* merit that all the *ingenuity in the* process of selection is required

The combination of merit and seniority in the matter of selection for promotion can best be expressed in the formula that such promotion should be made on the basis merit with due regard to seniority A practical application of this formula, which has in fact been adopted in certain cases would be as follows

The first requisite is to define the field of choice from which the selection is to be made This may be done by determining the number to be considered as a multiple of the number to be selected If for instance ten persons are to be selected for promotion the selecting authority may decide to consider thirty The exact multiple to be taken is of course a matter to be decided in each case. The larger the multiple however the greater is the emphasis on merit and less on seniority Alternatively the field for selection may be decided by prescribing a minimum seniority standard. An example of this is provided in the Indian Administrative Services (Promotion) Regulations, which restrict consideration of State Civil Service officers, for promotion to the I.A.S. to those who have at least eight years service in the former

Having decided the field of choice and thus limited the possible range of supersession the next step is to make the actual selection on merit by one or other of the processes referred to earlier or by a combination of one or more of them. Such a process of selection would naturally eliminate those in the field of choice who do not make the grade" for which the selection is being made.

Finally the persons who do make the grade have to be arranged so as to give the order in which appointments to the higher grade can be made as vacancies arise. Here again, it is necessary to blend merit with seniority A procedure frequently adopted is to arrange the names of those selected in the order of this seniority Less senior persons of outstanding merit are however placed above their seniors as a deliberate act of selection and recognition of superior merit. Another variation of this method is to group the persons selected into

broad categories of merit with suitable distinguishing titles, e g. Outstanding Very Good 'Good Fa r etc. All persons in one group are placed above all others in the next lower group but within each group, seniority prevails.

The principles discussed and the procedure described above represent the present trend of thought and practice in the Government of India. They form for instance, the basis of the promotion Regulations both for the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service. The procedure has also been adopted for promotions from grade to grade in the Central Secretariat Service and a proposal is under consideration for formally adopting the principles of selection mentioned for all appointments to 'Selection posts Further experience may lead to refinement of the procedure adopted or even to a redefinition of the principles in some of their details but it can well be claimed that in their general application the procedure outlined is perhaps as sound as could possibly be devised from the point of view of efficiency of the Services and the morale of the personnel.

RECRUITMENT TO PUBLIC SERVICES IN INDIA

A Study paper submitted to the Institute of Public Administration Government of India

Broadly speaking a university degree in arts or the pure sciences, is an essential qualification for direct recruitment, not only t the administrative and the executive Services in India, but also to many of the sub-executive and higher clerical Services For the lower clerical Services, the academical qualification required s either intermediate in arts or science, or a matriculation The criticism is levelled against the present system that it encourages far too many persons to study for university degrees, resulting in overcrowding in the universities and fall in the standard of higher education Further that university education is not eally required for the executive or clerical Services, and that a great deal of wastage of time and energy of young persons would be avoided if they were enabled to enter such services at a lower educational level and thus to acquire while they are still young the knowledge and skill needed for work in the Service. The critics cite in support the recruitment system in the United Kingdom which is designed to link recruitment to definite stages in the current educational process the administrative class takes a share of the best products of the universities the executive class with some exceptions draws its recruits from the sixth forms of the secondary grammar schools the clerical class mostly from the less bright products of the same schools and the sub-clerical cadres depend on the products of the modern and technical schools. The age of entry to each of the classes is also adjusted to the college and school leaving ages.

2. The other view is that with some modifications, in regard to the lower cadres, the present recruitment system should continue. The reform of the educational system, it is argued, should be determined by broad educational and social considerations, and sought directly and not through altering

recruitment qualifications. So long as the educational system yields graduates in numbers sufficient for meeting requirements of the executive, sub-executive and the higher clerical classes, it is in the interest of the public service that these classes should continue to be manned by graduates whose intellectual training and attainments and greater maturity cannot but prove useful to work in the Service. The fact that a proportion of posts in the administrative and the executive services is filled by promotion from the executive and lower Services respectively is urged as another reason for retaining a degree as an essential qualification for recruitment to the executive and the higher clerical Services.

3 The real area of disagreement is confined to the executive sub-executive and the higher clerical Services, and it may be considered whether a degree should remain a qualification for direct recruitment to all or any of these Services.

4. There is yet another point of view which while recognising that the higher executive and administrative Services require maturity of outlook, intellectual training and background of knowledge considers that where appointment to those Services depends on the results of a written competitive examination, a university degree should not be insisted upon. The intellectual and other qualities would, in many a case, be tested at the competitive examination, and insistence on a university degree it is argued, only leads to overcrowding in the universities.

5 Direct recruitment to the administrative and most of the executive services is made—with few exceptions—on the result of competitive examinations, the scheme of which is based mainly on the ideas that there should be—

(a) a test of intellectual ability and scholastic attainments through a written examination in subjects of the candidate's choice which might not have any direct relevance to a civil servant's work (optional papers)

and perhaps more decisive importance than the written intellectual tests. This is borne out by an analysis of the results of the I. A. S. and the Allied Services examination held during the years 1947-55. Roughly speaking, one out of every five candidates qualified at the written test, and was called for interview and of those called for interview two in every three candidates were disqualified. Many of those disqualified had done extraordinarily well at the written examination.

8. The questions that arise for consideration are

(i) Does the general scheme of competition in India require any modification and if so what?

(ii) Is the conception of a personality test at which candidates who do not give evidence of certain personal qualities at an interview lasting 20 to 30 minutes are disqualified a sound one?

9. Graduates in agriculture and civil, mechanical or electrical engineering are eligible for the I. A. S. examination but those in other branches of engineering or technology for instance chemical engineering or metallurgy are ineligible. The argument usually advanced in support of these exclusions, is that the study of professional and technical subjects does not ensure the degree of general cultural outlook, required in an administrative officer and usually found in graduates in arts or the pure sciences. Against this it is pointed out that the scheme of the competitive examination is such that a candidate whose interests are confined to professional or technical subjects, cannot possibly get through, as he will have to take some optional papers in subjects outside his professional and technical speciality to do well in the compulsory papers, and to show at the personality test, that he has some general interests. It is further urged that if a degree course in commerce can be regarded as providing liberal education, and one likely to develop a broad cultural outlook a course in engineering or technology ought not to be considered to be devoid of cultural value or incapable of developing a broad outlook. To the argument that entry into the administrative Services of persons

with technical and professional qualifications would involve wastage of highly trained manpower which is in short supply the answer given is that not many such persons are likely to succeed that persons with technical and professional degrees should not be allowed to have a feeling that the door to the highest Civil Services in the country has been firmly closed against them and that a small number of technically qualified persons coming into the administrative service would bring with them something of special value to those services. They would not function as specialists but they would so to speak, serve as a useful bridge between the specialists and the administrative and political part of Government Technical problems, it is added, are bound to assume increasing importance and that, while that is no reason to look for technical qualifications in administrators it would be equally wrong to consider technical knowledge a disqualification in an administrator The point to be considered is whether persons with technical and professional degrees should with or without any distinction be made eligible for the various executive and administrative services.

10 In our defence forces there is a system of recruiting cadets between 14 16 of age who after a training of 4 years, are commissioned into the Indian Army Navy or Air Force. The training is both in general and professional subjects, the object being the attainment of the requisite educational standard, and the acquisition, at the same time, of the mental moral and physical qualities essential to the progressive and continued development as an officer It is sometimes suggested that a similar system should be adopted for recruitment to the administrative services that in other words the State should take charge of the education of its future administrators by catching them young Against this, it is urged that it would not only create a feeling of exclusiveness among the administrative Services, and thereby widen the gulf between them and the public, but would also deprive the future administrators of the benefits of a truly liberal education which the universities

provide partly through opportunities for close contact between students of different disciplines, and with diverse aims aspirations and interests. A training academy howsoever well equipped and staffed it might be would lack the academic and cultural atmosphere of a university and would promote intellectual in-breeding, rather than a widening of outlook and interests It is further said that the virtual loss of prospects of entering the administrative Services would have a depressing effect on university students, and increase the sense of frustration that already exists The suggestion may be considered in terms of its likely effect on the service as well as on university education.

11 A certain proportion of the recruitment to the administrative and the executive Services is by promotion from lower services While the proportion in the case of the administrative Services is only about 25% it is usually higher in the case of the executive Services in some States, in fact, there is hardly any direct recruitment to the State Civil Service One view is that there should be more recruitment by promotion this would increase the incentive for good work amongst higher cadres -tried and tested men—who had proved their worth functioning as civil servants It is also sometimes said that while inequality of educational opportunities handicaps talented persons from the poorer classes in direct recruitment to the higher cadres they are able to prove their real worth once they are in service and that more promotions are therefore likely to "democratize the higher cadres, without lowering their efficiency On the other side it is urged that work in subordinate capacity gives to a civil servant a restricted outlook and approach, and that he is usually not able to adapt himself to the requirements of a higher service and to get their due share of the cream of the universities the bulk of the recruitment to those Services must be direct for a talented young person would not wish to enter the civil service at a lower level

12. It has been suggested from time to time that there should be some over-age lateral recruitment to the higher grades of the administrative Services, regularly. The object of the recruitment would be to bring into these Services persons who had distinguished themselves in other walks of life—e. g. the academic or the industrial—but who possessing aptitude for administrative functions, wished to change their profession. Such men, it is said, would bring new ideas and experience into the Service, and act as a most useful leaven. The points usually urged against this suggestion are that it would be difficult for such persons to acquire the outlook, and master the techniques and subtleties of public administration, and that over-age recruitment would have an adverse effect on the prospects and therefore on the morale of the regular recruits.

'In a large and complex organisation efficiency can only be achieved and maintained by a continuous and conscious effort of leadership and direction from senior officers. It is not sufficient merely to have good methods and clear instructions. As in many other spheres of activity the great problem is the human one and the greatest need is to recruit and train those who are likely to be the leaders of the future.

—SIR HAROLD EMERSON
(in *The Ministry of Works*')

RECRUITMENT TO THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

By

S B BAPAT I C. S

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In countries with a political organisation of the federal type it is usual for the Federal Government and the Governments of the constituent units to have separate organised services for the administration of the subjects falling within their respective spheres In India also there are Central Services to administer the Central subjects such as Defence Foreign Affairs Income Tax Customs, Posts and Telegraphs etc. the officers of these services are exclusively in the employ of the Central Government. The subjects lying within the field of State autonomy such as Land Revenue Agriculture Forests Education Health and the like are administered by State Services whose officers are exclusively in the employ of the different State Governments In addition, India also has in the "All India Services a form of personnel organisation perhaps unparalleled except in Pakistan namely services common to the Centre and the States—composed of officers who are in the exclusive employ of neither and may at any time be at the disposal of either One such is the Indian Administrative Service commonly and conveniently referred to as the I.A.S

The control and management of such a service is necessarily a joint cooperative affair The Service is organised in the form of a number of I.A.S. cadres one for each State. Initial recruitment is made by the Centre on the results of an open competitive examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission The officers so recruited are allotted to the different State cadres. The strength of each cadre is so

fixed as to include a reserve of officers who can be deputed for service under the Central Government for one or more tenures of three four or five years before they return again to the State cadre This ensures that the Central Government has at its disposal the services of officers with first hand knowledge and experience of conditions in the States, while the States also have officers who are familiar with the policies and programmes of the Central Government. The majority of individual officers have an opportunity of enjoying at least one spell of duty under the Central Government many have more than one such spell.

Another distinctive feature of the I.A.S. is that it is a multi purpose service composed of generalist administrators" who are expected, from time to time to hold posts involving a wide variety of duties and functions e.g maintenance of law and order collection of revenue regulation f trade, commerce or industry welfare activities in the field of education health, labour and development and extension work in agriculture and rural reconstruction.

The method of recruitment combines a written examination of a high standard including a ariety of subjects of the candidate s own choice, w th a searching personality test by an interview board in which the candidate must separately atta n a minimum standard. This ensures that the young men recruited to the Service possess not only a high level of intelligence and academic learning but also an adequate measure of the qualities of personality and character such as discernment, clarity of thought and expression, intellectual integrity self confidence self possession breadth of outlook and sense of moral and social values—qualities which must be looked for in persons holding responsible administrative positions in any democratic welfare State.

LEADERSHIP IN ADMINISTRATION

By

K N BUTANI

The existence of a large number of separate organised "Services" to deal with separate subjects has been one of the principal characteristics of the structure and pattern of administration in India. Members of these Services were recruited at the lowest stages and had a natural expectation in due course to reach the highest rungs in the Department concerned provided they continued to perform their allotted jobs satisfactorily with due regard to the rules regulations and prescribed procedures. There were occasional instances of individual officers being actuated by a real zeal for public service or for attaining consciously thought-out and well understood public goals. A considerable amount of esprit de corps undoubtedly existed but the main forces motivating individual efforts consisted almost entirely of a desire to secure the good opinion of the superiors thereby smoothing the path of advancement and the fear of punitive consequences descending upon any disobedience of an order or departure from the rules and procedures. The Heads of Departments and senior officers produced by such a system did a very good job of keeping the machine running and ensuring that rules and procedures were firmly followed. But it is hardly possible for any one to say that they had any need or inclination to exercise leadership in the real sense of the word. Such a state of affairs served admirably the special needs of the static law and order state as it then existed.

With the recent rapid expansion of governmental functions in general and of the public sector of industrial and commercial activities in particular the system of separate organised services is gradually breaking up; but the old

insistence on the strict observance of rules and regulations as a means of ensuring performance and integrity still persists. In the absence of the old cohesive force, the emphasis on compliance with rules and regulations produces only an outward conformity without instilling in the public servants a desire to improve individual performance. The rules have helped to regulate the conduct but they have *failed* to promote crystallisation of attitudes and perspectives so essential to the contribution of the best human endeavour: instead they have resulted in cramping individual initiative and ability.

But however perfect be the system of administration personnel performance cannot in the changed circumstances today rest alone on the efficacy of controlled mechanisms based on the concept of unity of command; it is equally essential to supplement them by leadership capable of *providing* a motivation stronger than that of mere safety of material return.

II

The role of leadership in heightening individual performance has been well understood in the Army for a long time. While acceptance of authority is incessantly drilled into the Jawans they come to accept it willingly because authority there is invariably coupled with attributes of personal leadership. At no time is this more patent than during actual combat when the best is wrung out of the Jawans by a display of qualities such as valour, courage and an indomitable *will to win, by the leader and not by* the mere imposition of any formal authority from above. The key-note of personnel administration in the Army is that people are not just ordered but inspired and "developed" to obey. They thus develop a sense of positive achievement and action-mindedness which are so glaringly absent *in civil administration*. The experience of the Army is a pointer to the need for the abandonment of the antiquated approach to personnel administration and its replacement by a positive and bold humanised approach *so that* the acceptance of authority becomes a voluntary discipline

and not an irksome imposition. The new approach should aim at developing the personnel rather than treating them as mere cogs in the administrative machine

We are today in the midst of the immensely exciting experiment of national development and thus in no less grave a state of emergency than the one created by war. Greater therefore is the need for leaders in administration to harness the vast stores of human energy for purposes of development. Administrative leadership assumes a unique significance in view of the importance attached in our democratic Republic to public cooperation and participation in the implementation of programmes of national development

III

Leadership in administration translated into practical realities implies that leaders must have spring and vitality in them to be able to tap the immense potentialities of human endeavour for creative activity. By dash enthusiasm and zest for work they should be able to infect the entire team they command with a pioneering spirit of endeavour and towards feats of administrative achievement

The most essential requisite of leadership in administration is the quality to inspire in men a sense of pride a sense of accomplishment and a satisfaction of having achieved something in the performance of their daily duties. The *unceasing computation of tax by clerks the indefatigable noting* on files by assistants the continuous concoction of mixtures by compounders all have an ultimate objective far beyond the limited tasks of the performer. It calls upon the leader to let the purpose behind the rule percolate down to the humblest operative so that the environment necessary for the inculcation of a sense of majesty is created

To win the loyalty and devotion of his staff the leader must possess a high *degree of integrity* objectivity perseverance and dynamism, as also ability in his field of work. He must also display an understanding of the human nature and group reactions, a warm hearted approach to the personal

problems of his men and a fraternal but strict attitude in dealing with administrative delinquencies. Above all, he should be able to shift the focus of attention of his employees from getting along with work to positive achievement and team work and thus release their innermost urges for better performance which are now bottled up on account of the fear psychosis engendered by lifeless bureaucratic methods of administration.

Instances of the important role played by leadership in administration are not lacking. Very often we find miracles of administrative achievements performed by units working far beyond their normal capacities just because their leader has succeeded in infusing in them a harmony a oneness of mind, so essential to team work. This integration takes place, not by the formal authority of the 'boss' but by the catalytic attributes of his leadership. Such attitudes can hardly be inspired by regulation perfects who with a slavish concern for the ritual of bureaucracy base administration on remote and insular' control and glorify the importance of pieces of paper thus dimming their own sense of human realities. By thus dehumanising administration they only succeed in causing the gradual atrophy of talent and initiative at lower levels of administration.

IV

How then are we to set about creating leaders in administration. Leadership is not a mere fusion of certain special *attributes*, though it *does* imply the possession of qualities like far-sight. Vitality understanding, sensitivity forbearance ability and integrity. Above all there must be the will to lead which comes only by the development of the above qualities in conditions conducive to their growth.

The development of the latent attributes of leadership though possible during the training period. is not wholly effective since decisiveness and dash, which are so essential to leadership can only be acquired by their actual exercise under real conditions. It is, therefore, desirable that suitable

tunities should be provided within the administrative hierarchy for the development of leadership Men of special merit should be chosen at a young age and provided with exceptional opportunities to develop their talents so that administrative leadership of high calibre and sufficient strength is available to the country in the near future. It is essential to develop leaders not only at the topmost echelon of administrative hierarchy but also at the middle and lower levels, in fact in every office where things have got to get going It is only then that the whole administration would be inspired by a new sense of purpose and geared to a higher level of activity

The above plea for the development of leadership in administration is in no way an advocation of a new hybrid form of the much debunked 'personality cult Far from it, it is the advocation of the development of certain executive attributes and perspectives on the part of the many who have been entrusted with the arduous task of administration in a democratic country Administrative leadership would lift the thinking and vision of the rank and file of civil servants above pedestrian levels. Dynamic leadership has taken the country through political revolution, what is now wanted is an all pervasive administrative leadership to enable the state to undertake successfully the manifold tasks for developing the national economy ushering in a socialist pattern of society

THE PERSONALITY OF AN ADMINISTRATOR

By

C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Vallabhbhai Patel was a great man. He worked for the deliverance of India from foreign rule and he lived to see it fully achieved. In the work of reconstruction which followed he saw to the integration of all the States in the Indian Union. About forty years ago Vallabhbhai Patel gave up the legal profession when the Motherland wanted one of his type for the gigantic struggle for liberation. But, alas before India could well get on without him, death snatched him from us. It was said of Augustus that it would have been better for Rome if Augustus had never been born or had never died. This can be said with great truth about India and Vallabhbhai Patel.

It is not intended that this article should deal with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's life. But what I shall talk about today viz. the efficient administration of our country was a subject uppermost in his anxious mind when death was relentlessly approaching him.

If one wrote a book on any subject it would be a grave defect if anything important and relevant to the subject were omitted. When writing a book one must be careful also about the amount of emphasis that is laid on each aspect that is dealt with. The reader's mind should be left with no bias but enriched with well balanced thoughts. In a talk of this kind one need not be so careful and lapses will be excused. Often it happens that when we exhaustively deal with any matter putting all the pros and cons justly weighing and balancing things one against another in a careful and proper way we shall have done justly and well but we leave no resulting positive effect behind. This is the evil of too much

of balance. We give information but little guidence. In fact we create plenty of doubt and caution and no momentum for initiative

We have turned the British out and we have told all the people of the land that it is good for them that they now govern themselves But after-thought leads one to some doubts. Our hopes can be realised only if and to the extent, that the administrative set up is satisfactory

If anyone investigated into the question what most people in India desire as regards Government—do they want democracy do they want a Federal or a Unitary Government do they want the American type of democracy or the British and so on ? I guess we shall see that the people want honest efficient prompt just and sympathetic officers, and they do not mind the form of Government The Constitution has been settled on the basis of democracy universal adult suffrage being the foundation thereof The selection of representatives who will wield supreme power in legislation as well as in amending the Constitution itself, is just left to the people every individual's judgment weighing the same as every other's No qualifications are prescribed for standing as candidates any one may be elected. Something like the principle underlying the universal postal system where distances don't count an anna will carry your post-card to the neighbouring village as well as to distant Calcutta or Cape Comorin, the distances and differences between men and men are ignored so far as the power to select representatives is concerned. That is a settled and final affair not to be disturbed till another Plato or Manu is born. What I shall discuss about is the type of men required for the satisfactory administration of tremendously big area and big population such as India is or even a single State like Bombay or Uttar Pradesh or Bengal is or even the reduced units down South. In the selection of personnel to fill official posts be it judicial or executive the principle of universal equality is not enforced and qualifications do count.

The people expect a rise in the general standard of comfort and this too not for one class at the expense of other but among all classes generally urban as well as rural. Apart from technical advances leading to increased average national income which will go towards bringing about a rise in the general standard of living, the importance of an efficient administrative organisation is very great. No people can be happy with an inefficient government or with a government that is *not firm and impartial. The psychology of the caste nexus* and of class differences is strong in India. All the greater is the need for firm and impartial officials, and the common people know this

For any administration to be good and efficient as a whole we want the right type of men The quality of the men placed in position is more important than the laying down of rules and methods of operation The caste consciousness is a hard reality It unites and divides in a very real manner today whatever be our goal. And today it is most Important in matters of administration. Short-sighted favouritism and concessions to produce contentment among classes and castes will be very short lived and deteriorate into a constant pandering to intrigues and factions if we do not look to the real efficiency of the administration.

Several causes have combined to raise the level of comfort that is aimed at in our country among all classes now Although needs have gone up the national income has not materially increased in that proportion. Hence the mental condition of our people after the achievement of complete Independence is not one that can be described at all as happy This is so especially in the case of those who have received school or college education of any kind

Religion is absolutely essential to drive away the fog that surrounds the truth in regard to what we really require. It is not less important than the devising of ways to increase national production in all directions. The spread of a sense of true values and the development of adequate spiritual strength for

facing the struggles that are ever involved in life can be done only through education organised on right lines. Apart from religion and sound education of intellect as well as character good administration is very important. It is important in all countries but in our country it is most important. An efficient and just administration can make up for a great deal of unhappiness and frustration in other respects.

For the administration to be efficient we require the right sort of men to be in position of power and responsibility. Whatever may be believed or said in the passion or thoughtlessness of the hour that often passes for democratic thought these men must come from our organised higher educational institutions. Splendid exceptions meteor like sometimes appear. Leaders and organisers with Herculean strength come up now and then without any or with but little academic education. But these are exceptions. The general rule is that the men we require for running the administration must come from our higher educational institutions. They cannot be got at elsewhere. The type of equipment and mental make-up that we require for good administrators must therefore be kept in mind in the organisation of higher education for these cannot be obtained for them elsewhere or later after recruitment.

What are the requirements we should demand in a good administration? Character is a fundamental requirement. And a fundamental requirement is most important. We cannot let fundamentals take care of themselves.

But though character is a basic requirement, it should be remembered that it is not the decisive factor that makes a person specially fit for administrative tasks. A very good man may not be fit at all for being entrusted with administrative responsibility in the civil business of the State even as is obviously the case in the conduct of a military operation. It would be easy but perhaps dangerous to give examples of known men who failed though they are persons of undoubted good character.

After this has been said and admitted we are apt to think that sound technical equipment is the decisive factor in each department of the public servi e. But it is not so. The special equipment repuired for various jobs are no doubt indispensable. But experts cannot govern nor can they be safely allowed to govern though they may wish and if permitted to able to dominate In administrative key positions the special technical equipment that comes into play in those departments is strangely enough by no means the essential requirement. To give only one example the man responsible for the fine and rapid development of the Electricity System of the Madras State was not an electrician and an electrical engineer could not have done it

What is essential at the top is the capacity to judge upon relevant advice and to decide promptly and rightly in executive matters Judicial offices are not the only places where the capacity to judge is essential. To decide in matters executive quickly and correctly is a gift of the gods And it is this that makes a good administrator In small as well as great affairs he proves to be a good administrator who has this talent for right judgment and quick decision. It may be that this early training can develop this quality But I am inclined to think that it is a congenital quality and all that we can do is to find it out where t exists and make use of it.

Those who are in the employ of Government in various capacities in the concerned branch and the people who are affected by the course of administration must know and feel that in matters of policy as well as in daily administration they can get clear and binding decisions without delay or procrastination and that there will be no messing about no modification and counter-orders recalling and revising and modifying decisions once reached.

Speedy decision does not mean hasty decision, decision without the consultation or discussion. The administrator should have the capacity to obtain the best out of his expert

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before this, because the problem I have dealt with is a very old problem.

What I have said applies not only to ministers and administrators in government, but to administrators in all big non-official organisations be it of industry or distribution of transport or other service. The days of big business may be thought to be over on account of the Congress resolution as to the pattern of a society that Congress wants to build up. But in reality it is not the case Big organisations are still wanted and will continue High taxation and low net profits are no doubt deterrent elements for private enterprise But though profits do not any longer accrue on the war period scale and though taxation is growing heavier and heavier with each budget, big business has its attractions still. As long as talent exists there is a vocational call for big business in which men cannot say nay profit or no profit taxation or no taxation. Big business in that sense has an undying future Human nature has a mysterious quality for it. Self interest and profits attract. But man is led by a master within, who is all powerful and cares not for calculations. Big men will continue doing big things because they cannot help it. Good administration is a common problem for private enterprise as well as for the welfare State.

To the fundamental requirement of character I made a brief reference but did not dwell upon it because it must be presumed. It is true as I said that it alone is by no means enough. But without it, let it be remembered, nothing else will avail. It is like daylight which we are apt to forget on account of its very importance Character is as important for administrators at every level, from the Chief Secretary down to the last grade servant, as sunlight is to every form of life.

CURRENT STATUS AND PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN INTERVIEWS

By

DR. J. L. KHANNA

Probably the first written record of an interview if interpreted liberally was in God's questioning Adam and Eve relative to their eating the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden. God's purpose was to determine whether or not they were qualified to continue living in paradise. Since then interviews of one kind or another have been going on for various purposes.

In its essentials an interview is a face to face meeting, involving both verbal and non-verbal interaction. Its operation is directed to a definite purpose other than the satisfaction of the meeting itself. An interview is a situation in which behaviour is sampled.

Such a broad definition suggests the existence of several types of interviews. Several classifications are possible according to the topic of the interview, purpose of the interview, profession, training of the interviewer or techniques used in interview. The classification also depends upon the direction and purpose of discussion.

Inspite of the doubtful scientific utility of the interview it is being extensively used for sampling behaviour in various situations and for seeking information of various kinds.

Some of the main uses of interview are briefly described below.

I. Use of Interview in Selection

A. The Employment Interview. The purpose of the employment interview is to determine an applicant's suitability for a specific job. It is a business contact. The importance of this interview is equal to its frequency.

B The Stress Interview This is a logical outgrowth of times in which we live. Its theory is applied almost directly to the preparation of soldiers for battles by which they are made to crawl under a cross fire of live ammunition. How can you tell how a soldier will perform in combat unless he is tested in somewhat similar conditions beforehand ?

According to G L. Freeman (16) the rationale behind a stress interview is —

(a) The primary purpose of the interview should be the appraisal of a candidate s ability to use his particular knowledge and experience in a social situation. It should partake of the nature of a trial act.

(b) The interview should be patterned so as to exhibit behaviour relevant to the demands of a particular job and evaluations based thereon should have regard for the attitude characteristic of supervisors of the job.

(c) Since such aspects of social effectiveness as stability and poise are best evidenced during stress, a part of interview should constitute in miniature a stress situation.

C The Group Interview There are at least three kinds —

(a) One interviewer and several interviewees

(b) Several interviewers and several interviewees

(c) Several interviewers and one interviewee.

The second and third procedures are extensively being used for selection purposes these days The first is not so popular as it becomes rather difficult for a single interviewer to observe all interviewees.

The second type is generally called upon the group interview test. The candidates are given a carefully chosen subject to discuss among themselves. The interviewers either sit among them as silent spectators or are hidden behind a one way screen to observe them. Each candidate is rated on a number of traits and characteristics on the basis of his per formance in the group discussion.

Harold Fields (15) reports the following advantages of a group interview —

1 It helps to appraise personality traits more effectively than is possible in the usual individual test.

2. The group interview releases the candidate from tensions that are frequent concomitants of tests.

3 The group test lends itself to appraising each candidate against the other instead of being judged on isolated performance

The third type is often called the board interview These days many days selections for executive jobs are made on the basis of this method. In this case a single candidate is interviewed by a number of persons. This technique is also largely employed by many universities to conduct what are *called oral examinations.*

II. Use of Interview in a Clinical Setting

In the clinical setting an interview is a face to face conversation between clinician and the patient both of whom are attempting to arrive at some resolutions of the latter's difficulties. It can be considered under two headings —

(a) *The Diagnostic Interview* The primary aim of such an interview is to help the clinician to understand the patient. Diagnostic interviews range in flexibility from free associative sessions of the psychoanalyst to the rigidly applied psychometrist test.

No diagnostic interview is either entirely standardised or entirely free The form used varies in degrees, depending upon circumstances, the training experience and personality of the interviewer and the purpose of the interview A diagnostic interview is always planned before the appearance of the interviewee. Preparation implies that the strategy not the tactics may be planned in advance. Tactics mean that which is actually said and done. The interviewing process may be supplemented by all aspects of the class study diagnostic test scores referral notes reports of the medical consultants etc.

(b) *The Therapeutic Interview* Th s varies with the kind of therapy used but the central purpose is to change the behaviour of the patient usually by making him arrive at an understanding of himself

Counselling interview is also a kind of therapeutic interview Williamson (45) defines this as

'a relationship between two people in which one person accepts the responsibility for defining the nature of that relationship and its process with the expectation that the other person will be happier in the long run"

There is no substitute for the clinical interview No one has yet found a superior way to obtain diagnostic informa tion so long as the interview is handled competently and over a long enough period.

III. Use of Interview in Public Opinion and Social Research

Interviews are being used extensively for measuring attitudes and opinions by many polling agencies. Operation of these is too well known to need specific elaboration here Their operations range from measuring the attitudes towards hair oils to presidency of America.

Interviews have also been extensively used in social surveys e.g Kinsey s (47) work on the sexual behaviour of homosapiens and Murphy s (46) work on social tensions i e. in topics which are difficult to study by other means.

It may be pointed out here that no interview may be fitted exactly into any one of these categories. Every thera-peutic interview involves constant rating and analysis (as in employment interview) and every diagnostic interview requires continuous estimating of personality characteristics.

Problems in Interviewing

Interviews have been recorded and observed but not with the purpose of testing hypothesis and making meaningful measurements.

The most important reason for the neglect of the inter view is its complexity No statement can overemphasise the complicated structure of the interview It is dynamic, not

Since the aim of science is prediction and control of behaviour it stands to reason that if an interview is to be of any scientific utility it must be valid and reliable It is interesting to note that in the clinical field till recently no serious effort was made to make interviews valid and reliable Some of the studies that are of interest are mentioned below —

Kelly and Fisk (21) in their study conducted in 1951 in Annarbor Michigan planned interviews to predict performance in clinical psychology The main conclusion is Neither of these interviews appear to have made an essential contribution to the assessment process

Porter (28) developed a scale for differentiating interview methods and demonstrated that such systematic characterisation of interview methods can be made with an acceptable degree of reliability

Snyder (36) provided an important part of the prototype of the definite studies of counselling which we may expect in future. He developed a method whereby a relationship between the client s expression and counsellor s responses can be analysed

In recent years Thorne (40) has become an important contributor to the development of interview techniques. He has provided a critical analysis of the non-directive trend of thought. In addition he has contributed a number of systematic interpretations of specific counselling techniques.

Andrews (2) associated with Thorne has worked out a rationale for different types of reassurance with specific illustrations of how and why they might be used.

One does not come across very many studies on validity and reliability of interviews in the field of social research.

In the industrial field (and sometimes in social) it has been found that interviews become more reliable and valid if a patterned or guided interview is used.

This technique is also sometimes called the standardised interview and is frequently used in employment process. In essentials in such an interview every move is very carefully planned before the candidate is interviewed.

Hoyland and Wonderlic (18) have devised a diagnostic interviewer's guide to conduct a standardized interview. They report a correlation between the various scores of interviewers using the diagnostic interviewer's guide as .71 and the corrected odd even reliability of the entire score as .82.

Harry W Daniels and Jay L. Otis (9) recorded 60 interviews in order to study them in a scientific manner. They found that :—

(a) It is possible to devise a small number of categories into which the remark made by the interviewer, and applicant may be classified and this helps in the validation of the interview

(b) It is possible to compare interviews by different interviewers.

(c) Interviewer is able to find out where he has made some mistakes.

(d) The interviewer seems to control the length of the interview to a greater extent than does the applicant.

Richard Ohrbrock (27) recorded some employment interviews and then analysed them. He also found this method useful in telling the interviewer where he had committed mistakes in interviewing

Such studies and others of similar type suggest that the use of a patterned interview can increase the reliability and validity of the interview data. In fact Wonderlic says :—

"The Terman Binet intelligence test is a highly standardised interview wherein reactions to questions have been carefully standardised and evaluated. When students of personnel have been able to develop interviews in the employment situations to the same high levels as the Binet test, then interviewing will play a valuable part in control situations."

However if this standardisation is carried to the extent that the questions to be asked by the interviewer are prescribed there is a danger that the interview will become a stereotyped procedure.

Without rapport both diagnostic and therapeutic effort will be relatively unsuccessful for neither truthful nor complete data can be obtained from the patient who does not have confidence and trust in the clinician. Rapport is a relationship which must be maintained and its establishment does not guarantee its continuance

If all the suggestions described later under the heading training of the interviewer are followed, they will help in establishing a rapport, although it must be pointed out that there are no *pucca* rules of the thumb that can be followed in establishing a rapport.

Physical setting has a very important influence on the establishment of rapport. Interview should be carried out in pleasant surroundings and interview should be well lighted and ventilated. Every interview should be carried out in privacy No one likes to wait beyond a reasonable length of time. It is, therefore essential that a schedule of appointments be made out so that such waiting is kept at a minimum.

7 *Training of the Interviewer* There has been no significant study so far to evaluate the characteristics of a good interviewer But many writers have made suggestions as to what an interviewer should do or should not do and how he should not.

Dale W Purcell (27) says that An interviewer should be a psychoanalyst to the degree of knowing at the moment whether the interviewee is nervous, frightened or distracted in any other way thus causing the interview to be difficult.

Newman, Bobbit and Cameron (26)say that an interviewer should be well trained in —

(a) interpretations of test data

(b) evaluation of background and personal history factor

(c) evaluation of personality characteristics and psychoneurotic trends.

Bingham and Moore (5) Tiffin (39) Ebroesy and Reged (30) and Fenalson (13) mention certain points that should be

borne in mind before the interviewer starts the interview These suggestions are summarised and given in the Appendix.

Some writers have suggested that interviews be either wholly or partially discarded.

Kelly and Fisk's (21) findings have already been discussed.

Runquist (31) contends that an interview should concern with something that cannot be measured better by some other way and comes to the conclusion that interviews should measure only a process of social interaction and nothing else.

But it is worth while to note Alec Rodger's (1) remarks about such an attitude —

"Now to those who from their ivory towers campaign with iconoclastic fervor against the interview and urge upon us the great merit of objective tests this may seem to be a heaven sent remark (referring to Kelly and Fisk's conclusions). Let us they may say drop this interview nonsense without more delay and get down to work. The implications of Kelly and Fisk's important investigation are very clear and the conclusion to be drawn is inescapable.

The interview is essential for checking the questionnaire entries for giving information for matching supply and demand for improving morale very often because it is vested interest. The interview has the tremendous advantage of inclusiveness, speed and flexibility It takes into consideration a much wider range of factors than can be readily tested (though most of these are irrelevant and most of these liable to misinterpretation) "

According to Edith or Mercer (12) "A strong feeling persists that an individual is judged most fairly if he presents himself for an interview It may often be unwise to overlook this strong and if not necessarily well founded belief."

No matter how impressive the battery of tests there are two things that can be performed only by the Interview First fitting test results together in a unified personality configuration and second, compensating in the overall

In the light of the above discussion the current status of interview can be summarised as under :—

1 A great deal of confusion exists as to what can and cannot be done by the interview

2. Research on interview is needed

3 Interview remains popular despite its questionable reliability Most probably interview will not be abandoned because of the curiosity to see "the man in flesh

4 The valid ty and reliability of the interview may be highly specific both to the situation and the interviewer No universally accepted or fixed correlations can be taken as a criterion for deciding that the interview is very useful or entirely worthless.

5 An interview regardless of its length and purpose should be conducted in a standardised fashion as far as possible. This prevents aimless ramblings lengthy digressions, and the possibil ties of omitting important areas.

6 The interviewer must be skilled in eliciting full and complete information from the interviewee in observing signi ficant behaviour and in synthesising all of the information developed during the interview with that available from other sources in a val d prediction

APPENDIX

1 Know the job analysis of the positions for which you interview appl cants

2. Deserve and gain the interviewee s confidence.

3 Have a general plan for your questions, but execute the plan with greater formality than is common in business conversation.

4 Be at ease and try to overcome any diffidence on the part of the applicant.

5 Be friendly and interested in the interview

6. The interviewer should appear unhurried even though many people are waiting to see him.

7 The interviewer should accept whatever hesitant and halting attitudes and ideas the client puts forth and should

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tion for the necessary artifical nature of the test situation. At the present time it is hard to imagine how the interview can be discarded in a clinical situation.

If interviews cannot be easily discarded what is the way out ? That is the crucial question. The answer is that interview should be made scientific but how ?

In a scientific analysis of the interview the interview must be considered as complex experimental situation enveloping many variables which are in constant interaction. These variables must be identified and dealt with in a systematic manner

Percival M. Symonds (34) suggests that we must bear in mind the following factors while tackling interviews in a scientific manner —

A Factors inherent in the subject

1. Age of the subject.
2. Intelligence of the subject.
3. Sex of the subject.
4. Race of the subject.
5. Socio-economic level of the subject.
6. Language facility of the subject.
7. Emotional need of the subject.
8. Emotional security of the subject.
9. Subject's attitude towards the interviewer
10. Subject's previous acquaintance with the interviewer
11. Purpose with which the subject comes to be interviewed.

B. Factors inherent in the interviewer

1. Age of the interviewer
2. Intelligence of the interviewer
3. Sex of the interviewer
4. Race of the interviewer.
5. Authority of the interviewer
6. Personality of the interviewer
7. Social outlook of the interviewer
8. Psychological understanding of the interviewer.

9. Interviewer's previous acquaintance with the subject.
10. Interest of the interviewer in the subject.

C. *Factors in general situation in which the interview is conducted.*

1. Place of interview
2. Time of the interview
3. Persons present.
4. First second or subsequent interview
5. Expressions of the subject directly preceding the interview
6. Voluntary vs non voluntary nature of the interview

D. *Factors in form and content of the interview*

1. Content of the question.
2. Form of the question.
3. Interpretations suggestions, and other reactions of the interview
4. Telling subject purpose of the interview
5. Remarks interpolated by the interviewer

Some of Symond's factors are not operationally defined and as far as possible they should be defined before actual research on interviewing is undertaken.

These are some of the variables which can be studied in the interview Others must be inferred through a thorough knowledge of pre and post interview situations on the part of both the interviewer and the interviewee. It seems an impossible task to consider all of the factors present but not even the most rigorous of the physical sciences does its. It should be possible however to select those which are apparently important and systematically study them.

Talking of these problems Berdie (6) says "These problems facing the individual contemplating a study of the interview are of frightening proportion and he could not be called a coward if he withdrew to the relatively elementary field of atomic physics. The interview research however should attract both the fool hardy and the brave."

In the light of the above discussion the current status of interview can be summarised as under —

1 A great deal of confusion exists as to what can and cannot be done by the interview

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4 The validity and reliability of the interview may be highly specific both to the situation and the interviewer No universally accepted or fixed correlations can be taken as a criterion for deciding that the interview' is very useful or entirely worthless.

5 An interview regardless of its length and purpose should be conducted in a standardised fashion as far as possible. This prevents aimless ramblings lengthy digressions and the possibilities of omitting important areas.

6. The interviewer must be skilled in eliciting full and complete information from the interviewee in observing signi ficant behaviour and in synthesising all of the information developed during the interview with that available from other sources in a valid prediction

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6. The interviewer should appear unhurried even though many people are waiting to see him

7 The interviewer should accept whatever hesitant and halting attitudes and ideas the client puts forth and should

express neither moral nor ethical judgment nor approval or disapproval of these ideas and attitudes.

8. The interviewer should express the client as a conversational equal during the interview

9 Extend a friendly greeting

10. Do not let stereotypes halos or labels, make your decision for you; determine your own appraisal of the applicant

11 Encourage the applicant to give detailed answers and keep him to relavent material.

12. Always have control of the interview

13 Be sincere.

14 Always be calm and undisturbed in the interview

15 Prepare or some say memorize a schedule of questions.

16. Give the applicant your undivided attention.

17 Be courteous and business like

18 Use the interview to determine attitudes opinions trends of beliefs.

19 Be sure that you understand each statement of the applicant as you go along

20. Keep interview appointments promptly whenever you make them.

21 Do not be too easily satisfied, be sure that your questions are completely answered.

22 Follow up leads given by the applicant in his statements.

23 Don t ask questions that can be answered by more reliable methods.

24 Use the interview to gain access to objective data.

25 Make the interview a two way affair; Give the appli cant some information about the company and the job.

26. Use the interview to gain information in addition to that already stated on the application blank.

27 Separate facts from inference

28. Provide for privacy

viewee Remember that you may learn something about the applicant after you have said good bye

71 Avoid haste and perfunctoriness in making ratings.

72 If possible average your ratings with the ratings of some other interviewers about the same candidate so that some degree of prejudice of several judges may cancel each other

73 The interviewee must be viewed as a specimen in a cultural series.

74 Organic motors of action must be socially relevant.

75 The peculiar role of family group in transmitt ng culture must be recognized.

76 The social situation must be carefully and conti nuously specified as a factor

77 The continuous related character of experience from childhood through adulthood must be stressed.

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ON INTERVIEWS

A.A.A. FYZEE

The interview as a mode of selection by Public Service Commissions is the object of attack and disparagement by almost every one except perhaps by a recently successful candidate. How is it possible to judge of a man's ability and character for public service within the space of ten or fifteen minutes? The proposition put in these terms is certainly difficult to sustain, but one may respectfully suggest that it is nothing more than a half truth. A famous judge has said that a half truth is more dangerous than a lie. That may not apply in this instance but it is well to remember first, that the interview is undertaken by experienced persons, who are proficient in the art and science of judging, who are known for their independence and integrity and who are by no means so vain as to think that their judgments are infallible. Secondly only a very small percentage of interviews last for ten to fifteen minutes, the majority are between 20 and 30 minutes, and finally the interview is only an additional means of judgment. There is the written record of the man's career and it is to supplement this that the interview takes place. In other words, the interview begins where the dossier ends. Similarly in certain cases where there is an examination but the man has had no experience of service, the interview is another test applied for discovering his relative fitness. The method of selecting personnel by interview is adopted not only by Public Service Commissions in India but also by a number of other Government agencies and private firms.

II

What really is an interview? It is a purposeful and well directed conversation on topics of choice, and is an attempt to bring out the experience, the skill and the intelligence of the

candidate While the general principles of an interview are the same, each particular post or selection has its own special considerations and special criteria of choice But generally speaking it may be said that three matters are uppermost in the mind of the interviewer First technical skill, second, general experience in the field and third the intelligence and initiative of the candidate

Two or three illustrations will, perhaps, make the method of the interview clear Suppose we want to select a doctor or an engineer or an administrator While the general approach will be the same we will have to ask ourselves what kind of a doctor or engineer or administrator it is that we want. In the case of a doctor we shall require certain academic qualifications. They will be found in the dossier But if we want a surgeon or an anaesthetist or a specialist in children s diseases we shall have to ask him what his experience is in these particular fields and at the end of half an hour or so we should certainly be able to supplement the written record in such a manner that the candidate s skill and experience become real to us.

In the case of an engineer similar principles of choice apply We shall want to know what kind of training he has had ; what kind of buildings he has built what are his special interests whether he is still interested in the use of scientific methods for solving important problems and whether he has surmounted practical difficulties which lie in the path of all engineers.

In the case of a general administrator slightly different questions assume importance We shall want to know whether he is a man of clear thinking and is capable of setting his hand to a wide variety of jobs which he may be called upon to perform in later life and for this purpose general knowledge and general awareness of things is of the greatest importance What is needed is commonsense and the capacity for quick decision rather than great erudition or brilliancy of imagination. Here is a good picture of the ideal administrator

Your great administrator above all has judgment, personality and commonsense judgment that makes his decisions right more often than they are wrong commonsense that gives him a solid grasp of essentials and takes him to the heart of a problem personality of a calibre and a force that carries people with him, exacts descipline with the rarest recourse to overt power and enables him to wring success even out of a wrong decision. He is intelligent but with a full share of earthiness. He thrives on the gross air of every day affairs He has the common touch. He likes people. He has a zest for life. Essentially he is a well rounded well balanced man, broadbacked, with a certain simplicity of nature and the sense of proportion that goes with a sense of humour So far from shrinking from difficulties he finds life savourless without them. Problems attract him like mountains to the born climber—he itches to get at them. He may have ambition—this adds driving force—but it is no substitute for the zest for life and human contract. He may have, indeed he must have considerable gifts of intellect, but he is not intellectually aloof. In short, he is a man to whom management is one of the supreme arts of living. There then, is the sort of man we are looking for Or rather we are looking for the sort of youngster who, with right handling, great care and often great patience, will turn out sometime in his thirties or forties to be that sort of man ..

The particular solutions offered by the candidate are of comparatively lesser importance than his attitude and capacity to think out things To take an illustration, we may ask the candidate about the policy of prohibition or the use of Hindi as the official language of India. There is room for great divergence of opinion on these questions. But what is of importance is the manner in which the young man marshals his facts and produces them and brings you to the solution which is in his mind. It reminds us of what used to be said regarding the training in the universities in England—it does not matter what you read, but it does matter how you read it. The solution

offered by the candidate is of comparatively minor importance what matters is the method by which he offers the solution.

III

Lawyers are accustomed to say that a cross-examiner is born and not made that no one can teach the art of cross-examination and that all that can be done is to learn from the example of a great practitioner There is a great deal in common between a cross-examination and an interview Both are designed to find out the truth of the matter but, while in a cross-examination you may be opposed by a clever and unscrupulous witness who does not wish to tell you the truth, in an interview you have a young man who almost always desires to display his wares to the best possible advantage. In other words, the witness in a cross-examination tries to conceal an important fact, while a candidate in an interview attempts to give the best account of his qualifications and experience and almost wishes to tell you even more than you desire. It cannot be denied that a cross-examination is far more difficult than an interview but experience shows that the art of interviewing a candidate is a difficult one some of the pitfalls can be avoided, but a really good interviewer is not common.

An easy candidate is a person who falls in with the spirit of the interview and begins to talk in a natural and unaffected manner He is not afraid and he knows his subject tolerably well. The difficult candidate is a man who suspects the Interview Board or swaggers and boasts, or talks too much and gets confused and mixes up truth with imagination. The present writer has found the greatest difficulty in interviewing a candidate who suspects the bona fides of the Selection Board. He knows but will not speak freely He tells a number of things but keeps back much more. Another difficult case is of a man who is ill or nervous and cannot do justice to himself It is impossible to give him a second chance and one feels helpless that nothing better can be done.

There are various kinds of candidates whom the Selection Board has to encounter The best of them are those who try

to speak naturally on matters which are well within their own personal knowledge. Some, however try to ride the high horse, and some try to bluff and to carry conviction by endeavouring to claim omniscience. This is rather a dangerous procedure because the likelihood is that the bubble can be pricked by some member of the Board or the other. A familiar case is this: Quite a number of candidates on being asked about their general reading, mention the novels of Bernard Shaw. Now apart from any other considerations, the possibility that at least one member might have read some of the works of Shaw including the plays must surely be considered by the candidate.

A certain amount of preparation, both emotional as well as factual, is necessary if a candidate wishes to make a good impression. Apart from general knowledge, which he should naturally possess, he must brush up the main elements of the subject which he has studied, particularly in relation to the job he seeks. Supposing a man applies for the post of a civil engineer. He must surely sit back and think as to what are the normal questions relating to his job which may crop up before a Selection Board. We often have candidates who apply for a job for which they are well fitted but have never given a thought to this question. The brief encounter with the interviewers then becomes an unnecessary trial, when it might otherwise have been a pleasant conversation.

IV

To produce a friendly atmosphere, and not to reduce the interview to the level of a cross-examination or a *viva voce* test, should be the aim of all interviews. Quite often one talks too much and does not allow the candidate to speak. Sometimes one is in a sarcastic mood and one is tempted to give a devastating reply to a poor candidate who thereupon flops completely by reason of nervousness. To preserve a natural flow of conversation in the artificial atmosphere of a Board Room is not easy. The candidate knows that experienced officers are watching him, he is utterly at a disadvantage, and it is this feeling of nervousness and strain which must be removed so that he can speak

naturally and tell the Selection Board what he knows and confess freely what he does not. To achieve this is not easy But it can be done and is achieved in the great majority of cases.

In interviewing candidates a certain number of questions arise in one's mind and some of these have been formulated as follows :—

(a) What is the standard of the candidate's mental ability? Does he think logically and efficiently? Can he think for himself? Can he get quickly to the heart of a matter and see the principles involved? Can he generalize correctly? Is he good at seeing the implications of points made? Can he acquire a sound background of knowledge and use it successfully?

(b) Is he business-like? Is he interested in the practical details of a scheme as well as in the broad principles? Can he think out the general lines on which a practical task should be organized and take into account the quantitative factors involved? Can he take decisions and stand by them?

(c) Has he shown himself to be constructive and imaginative or does he merely reproduce?

(d) Can he express himself clearly and cogently both in speech and writing?

(e) Is he mentally honest? Does he appear to be a man of complete integrity? Has he the courage of his convictions?

(f) Has he been interested in his surroundings and in the people he has met? Does he get on well with his equals, his subordinates and those in authority? Do people like him and continue to like him? Is he, for his age and position, a person of some weight and maturity a man whose judgment is respected? Has he shown some interest in managing affairs (e g at school at the university in the Forces), and has he been successful in them?

(g) Does his record suggest vitality and stamina? Does he show a proper zest and enthusiasm?

(h) Is he mentally adaptable and flexible or is his mind rigid and impervious to new ideas?

(i) Is he a man with some continuity of purpose? Has he thought responsibly about the work for which he is applying thus the likely to develop an interest in public business and in the particular work of his department? Will he be loyal to his chiefs and to their policy? Is his ambition reasonably attuned to the requirements of the public service?'

V

Last of all, a great responsibility rests on the chairman of a board of interview He must ensure that the candidate is interrogated in a proper spirit; that a friendly atmosphere is created, that difficult questions are avoided, that no one should even unknowingly kill a candidate. Sometimes a problem, to which a wrong answer is given by the candidate is pursued with such vehemence and in such tortuous detail, that the candidate writhes like a witness under the fire of cross-examination. The atmosphere of the court room or of a university *viva voce* examination is a thing to be a avoided like poison.

And yet, the questioning must be well-directed, with a set purpose. One comes across distinguished experts who ask one or two elementary questions in a haphazard manner and when the candidate fails to answer they conclude that the man is worthless. This mistake can be avoided by the chairman of the board intervening and putting the candidate at ease by a light remark or by asking a question of a different character Above all each expert must be encouraged to speak to the candidate on his own subject, so that the final judgment is

Memorandum by the Civil Service Commissioners on the use of the Civil Service Selection Board in the Reconstruction Competitions London 1951 Para 33 P 9

based on the pooled resources of the mind and experience of each member of the Selection Board

An admirable thing would be to take a sound movie of an actual interview extending over half an hour and show it to the public without comment. Such a spectacle would assuredly go far towards allaying public anxiety regarding the horrors of the Public Service Commission interview

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

I. What is an interview ?

A selection interview according to Dr Edith Mercer and Dr Ansley both of the Royal Institute of Public Administration, London— is one part of the selection process which in its turn is a part of the longer process in which the individual and the jobs are brought together In all large organisations like the U P S C the Defence organisation, State Governments the Big Business Houses of the country specialised agencies have been set up to select right men for the right job

II Functions of an interview

An interview may have several or all of the following functions —

1 To check basic facts given in your application.
2 To test your capacity in relation to the job
3 To enable an assessment of your personality both your intelligence and qualities
4 To observe your physical fitness general bearing and manners and your smartness

II

Sweep of an Interview

The central purpose of an interview is to assess the intrinsic as well as extrinsic worth of a candidate in relation to the job for which the candidate is being examined. It also measures the progress made by the candidate in the light of education, social and specialised opportunities available to him and hence to predict the effectiveness with which he will deal with the task required of him in a particular job or career

The candidate according to Dr Alec Rodger of National Institute of Industrial Psychology London, must be evaluated and considered from the following aspects

1 Knowledge. This can be judged from his (a) general educational level and (b) specialised training including previous occupation and experience.

2. General ability This means his level of intelligence and capacity to learn as distinct from what he has already learnt.

3 Special aptitude for the job even if under-developed.

4 Disposition or intrinsic personality as shown by

(a) Adjustment of effectiveness with other people.—This means his skill in human relations. It is concerned with the amount of strain he can stand without getting flustered, nervous or demoralised. Qualities like reliability sense of responsibility and emotional stability are the qualities that can be adjudged by this method.

(b) Motivation or effectiveness with work. This is the key as to how far he can go on with his job. It is concerned with his ambition and goals of life and how much determination he can show in achieving them.

Qualities like initiative ambition perseverence enterprise resourcefulness are evaluated here.

For senior posts of heavy responsibility like the I.A.S and other covenented posts in Big Firms the Government or the firm management must also know your moral social and political attitudes

5 Your interest and aim in the career in relation to the post applied for How far are you really interested in this career and whether your interest is genuine or only acquired through persuation or example of others.

6 Your physical fitness and capacity : Whether you are physically fit to bear the strain caused by the career you want to adopt.

Your past experience or opportunities you already have had and the degree of fitness or specialisation you have acquired during this experience.

III

Human or personality aspects of the post or career

What aspects of personality the job or career or post requires.

Aspects or requirements of the career or post.

1 **Opportunities** We must know what opportunities does the job or career offer what is the grade of payment and the additional facilities if any we must study the hours of work and cond tons of service and its prestige in society

2 **Physical capacity requirements** We must know whether job is easy or it needs long hours of office attendence and also whether it needs extensive travelling and long interruption of family ties. What are the climates under which work has to be done.

3. **Knowledge special qualifications or experience** We must understand the basic requirements and special qualifications or previous experience for the job or career chosen

4. **General ability and intelligence** We must under stand the intelligence requirements of the job demand it will make on the candidates capacity to learn and his capacity to think and draw conclusions. You must study the level of intelligence required whether limited and specific decisions have to be taken or a large scale policy making or planning has to be done.

5 **Special aptitudes** We must study whether the work requires more than average degree of special aptitudes or faculties for understanding or acquiring a particular skill like mechanical aptitude skill for manipulating or constructing objects judging artistic talent or a genius for words and figures.

6 **Disposition for the job** You must understand whether the job needs meeting and handling lot of people or needs an isolate concentration on work Whether post requires an aggressive, persuasive or patient and hard working nature.

7 **Interests** We must understand what type of extra mural activities and interests are demanded by the career and whether club enjoying, sportsmanship or public speaking will be

an additional requirement for the post Fundamentally we must study the fundamental human motives that are called into play for a satisfactory execution of the job

IV

Techiques of Interviewing and personality assessment

The techniques of personality assessment have reached such high degree of efficiency and specialization that not only they reveal the facts of your past career but also your attitudes interests preferences and other character traits. Such knowledge is supremely important for your subsequent success and fitness for the career or post for which you are being inter viewed The interview also gives the selecting authorities an opportunity to verify substantiate and weave together the miscellaneous scattered information gained from your through indirect methods and reference to other sources so that finally a clear picture of your personality structure is revealed to them. It makes the task of selecting the candidate easier and fool proof and free from nepotism and favouritism

The latest techniques of psychological interviewing far from being rigid are very flexible and can be easily adjusted for a wide variety of posts like the IAS Indian Foreign Services Defence Services and other gazetted posts in the Centre and the States and the covenented posts with Big Business Houses

These techniques are elastic instruments which can adapt themselves to a variety of situations and persons and what is more they can reveal to us a more integrated picture of the personality of the candidate than was possible through any other system, of staff selection,

The interview as a method of staff selection is not only acceptable to the interviewer and employers but also to the persons to be interviewed. It affords them the psychological satisfaction to all the parties that they have attempted this highly tricky human problem in as objective a manner as possible Not only the candidate wants a chance to fight his case but the public Opinion in a age of democracy also demands

it And finall n the words of Prof P E Vernon, Interview requ res ne ther the expert validation and development which are essential for purely psychological tests nor the laborious and sk lled mark ng methods required for scientific research They are very convenient to all administrators and are widely used by the U P S C and the Big Business Houses in India

2 Intelligence tests They are meant to evaluate your intell gence coeffic ency your mathematical mechanical artistic or l nguistic ntell gence and are used for selecting young cand dates for train ng in Defence Serv ces and Engineering serv ces Such tests also nclude Word Buil ing Story Writ ng, Mattrices and Puzzlogrames

3 Aptitude Test Such tests are usually applied to measure special apt tude for the Army Engineering Art stic, or literary careers They are also applied to younger candi dates and are invaluable n mak ng a fair selection.

4 Personality Tests There are two types of such tests. ( ) Cleverly wo ded quest ons meant to reveal the Style of Life Degree of Personality Integration and Character Traits of the cand dates being selected for senior posit ons nvolving great social responsibility (b) Special tests for younger candidates req uired for the Defence Services. They are des gned to d scover the initiative resourcefulness and such other positive traits like moral psychological and mental stam na of the youngmen

5 Field and Group Tests Such tests are further aid to d scover the power of leadership self reliance and power of self-express on, persuation and last but not the least the power of public-cooperation.

These tests have found un versal applicat on both in selecting senior men for responsible jobs like the IAS and youngsters for special careers like the National Defence They are being employed by all the Selection Boards like the U P S C Services Selection Board and the B g Business Boards. The nature of tests depends on the level of candidates and the

nature of posts for which the candidates are being considered.

The usual tests coming under this heading are —

A. **Public speaking**

The candidate is made to deliver an *impromptu* speech for say five minutes on any topic given on the spot. This test can evaluate your grasp over correct affairs, your power of co-relation of relevent date and your self-confidence in facing distinguished audiences and crowds.

B **Leadership through group Discussion.**

Participation in a group discussion reveals your powers of intellectual leadership persuation summing up a report and general behaviour in a conference. They are used in IAS Big Business Houses and the Service Selection Board.

C. **Personal situation tests.**

Such tests are put to Defence Service candidates and test their physical resourcefulness and self-confidence in meeting unexpected environmental situations

These tests can be further subdivided in two types

D **Field obstacle tests for young candidates**

(*i*) **Team Spirit Test** Used in Services Selection Boards, group obstacles are placed to test the team-spirit and leadership of the candidates by making them overcome obstacles through group activity and cooperation

(*ii*) **Individual Field Obstacle Tests** Such test judge the physical fitness prowness and physical situation and stamina of the young candidates to be selected for military careers

V

Multiple Interviewing.

You have so far learnt what an interview is what are its functions and their sweep You have also learnt that understanding the human or personality requirement of each post or career is an important part of interview training Now we have to study how are the various factors of candidate's personality named as the Rodger Scale are to be analysed. The actual

2 It minimises subjectivity or personal prejudices and perference of the individual member and ensure great justice cuts nepotism and favouritism.

3 It enables the various officers like the technical, financial and administrative who have to get work from the candidate to be present at the time of selection.

4 Technically it has the advantage of permitting the other members of the Board to concentrate on questioning the candidates while one member is busy taking notes about you or trying to judge our fitness by formulating special questions

5 It enables some members to observe your reaction like nervousness irritability self-confidence self-content while you are answering questions of other members

Size and Structure of the Board

In most important Board like that of U P.S C. Services Selection Boards and Selection Boards of big firms like that of Tata there are three to seven members which include one chairman. The number should always be odd so that the chairman's casting vote may decide any controversial decision. Larger *numbers are cumbersome. Two is rather an impractical number* because

(a) it is an even number and in case of difference of opinion one will be divided against another and no imparity decision can be taken.

(b) it increases the scope favouritism or prejudice for or against some types of candidates particularly if both members think alike.

(c) it leaves less scope for discussion in an informal manner

Small high power Departmental and Business House Selection Boards usually have three members. This number is ideal because it saves overall time and still allows sufficient time to each member and the chairman to ask questions. In such interviews which last about 20 minutes the chairman first questions the candidate for five minutes, then other members get five minutes each leaving behind still five minutes for the chairman

to round off the interview So if there were five members such an interview would take 30 minutes. Therefore if you have gone up for a specialist's post with Planning Commission, Production Ministry Subordinate Selection Board Tatas, Burma Shell or U.P.S.C. you will generally face a three member Board one of them will be Personnel or Administrative Officer one specialist *or the representative of the* section in which you are going to work and the chairman of the Board will be Secretary of Planning Commission, Production Ministry or Member U.P.S.C. or some other senior boss of the firm.

The Chairman is the most important man in the Board. His role and functions differ from that of other members. He not only makes the final decision but also guides the interview suggests what questions should be asked from you and the manner of grading or marking and even your terms of service and initial pay are to be decided by him. When the first round of interview is over it is the chairman who will hold some vital discussion with you to observe some of your peculiarities He will do this without any views but will put provocative questions to draw you out of your citadel or quiet self-confidence and reserve

Finally when the interview is over it is he who will sum up your opinions and views. He will also summarise the entire interview and formulate an agreed view on your fitness or otherwise and secure the concurrence of his Board members on them.

He should never be treated lightly All his questions must therefore be weighed and then answered. You should never lose temper with him nor lose your sense of balance and firmness with him.

Board Procedure and Evolution

Whatever the *composition* each board has *before starting* interviewing you they have agreed upon and formulated a definite plan of attack in order to avoid duplication or fail to question you on any important aspect of you

E. Few positive points but not suited for the post.

F Quite unfit.

A second method of evaluation is numbers grading With marks ranging by tens from O to 100 They try to examine the candidate on ten points and 10 marks for each point. But for I A. S we have 400 marks and for Central Class I Services we have 300 marks we have twenty points for 20 or 15 marks each. Under this marks scheme there are three methods of arriving at a Board mark

Some of these methods are at present being used in India

1 The chairman announces his provisional marks and asks for comments. In the light of those comments and further discussion he amends his grading or sticks to it if he convinces other members Here the chairman dominates.

2 The chairman does his own marking and gets the marks by other members The average represents the final result When the number of members is five or more and one of the members gives an odd finding it can however be committed as out of the average This method is mechanical

3 This is the best of the three methods The chairman makes his own provisional marking and asks each member about his award. He then initiates discussion first on the highest and then on the lowest markings At the end of discussion he invites the members to reassess their awards and finally gives decision on what appears to be generally accepted or majority view In case of a tie he decides by his casting vote.

Here a frank exchange of views take place among the members which coupled with various previous test records and candidates personal record considerably narrow the gap and fair decision is reached

This marking method is useful for large number of candidates as we have I A. S and Class I Services. When the number of candidates is limited to 10 to 15 the Board couples the first grading method with the later working method In I. A. S the last working method is used and we have 400 marks divided into 20 points

The interview pattern

There are three parts in which all interviews are divided.

1 Preliminary Part
2. The main part (Biographical Interview)
3 The Rounding off.

The Preliminary Portion.

1 The preliminary portion is the most important part of your interview because it is here that you are going to create your first impression which may very well be your last. Anyhow if you create a sympathetic impression on an important member like the chairman in the first few words you have made him your friend and he will try to take you out of soup in the later part and even give you questions where the answer is also suggested or implied If unfortunately you do not cut much ice in few early remarks you create a costly hostility which might undo your best performance and a brilliant record In the preliminary portion you will be judged by the following two facts of yourself

(a) 1 Your bearing and physical make up
  2 Verification of your application form and other written facts about you
(b) 1 This includes your dress and appearance.
  2 Your manner of entry greeting and your mode of taking a seat.
  3 Your self-confidence, in speech and facility in carrying conversation.
  4 Your physical fitness and conversation.

A tall well built straight walking healthy looking person with carefull turned out shirt or sherwani with well chosen accessories speaks itself well. If you have a confident manner with no hesitation, all the same remaining agreeable and courteous in manner you have won half the battle. Your self possession and well being will indicate to the Board members that you can well handle solutions involving other people and your fit and strong personality is a fair certificate of your meeting any difficult situation with a calm and firm manner

ality Your motivation or basic personality is consistently successive A high level of adjustment is shown by the responsible positions you have held successfully So you can be trusted to take up positions of leadership and bearing responsibility without strain. This school can be *path-indicator* of your future career

3 *Future Education*

Some people finish at school level while other go to the university or even some technical college Therefore your record of higher education and your participation in games, clubs, societies will bear out your internal and external self Pure success in studies would indicate an introvert character while excessive pursuit of social activities will mark you out as an extrovert personality This will be a major indication of the job or career An introvert will put on for an office man, a teacher and other sedantry professions while a marked extrovert will lead to policies salesmanship and business administration.

4. Working life

Questions about the life you lead after finishing studies will be a clue to your consistancy perseverance hardworking capacity intelligence and willingness, to pick higher knowledge with oneness of purpose. If you have only worked steadily for a living you show a steady contented unambitious career If you have had to improve your qualifications or changes for higher employment you display a progressive form and outlook. Also your wage level indicates your present capacity Also they learn and ask you whether you are engaged in a repetitive job or some post where a high level of skill responsibility and planning is required. If you are doing the latter work successfully you are displaying a high level of *Ability and Motivation Knowledge and Initiative* Therefore the interviewers feel that if you are entrusted with a higher job with greater opportunities of handling men and situations you will bear the responsibility successfully

If, however you have been consistantly leaving professions or jobs they will ask you often searching questions They will

want to learn whether you shift to jobs of greater responsibility or you have been a mere shirker escapist and blaming the environment for your personal failures So please never do excess of complaining against your employers if you have to explain the leaving of a job. A complaining and shifting person indicates a shaky *Motivation* and pessimist.

Sparetime activities. Questions about your out-door life, your views on current topics on social political and economic problems give an important clue to your adult personality

For young candidates healthy out-door life is as urgent as food and clothing An indifferent lazy inactivity or a shifting out-door life indicates basic passivity and shifty indisciplined nature. So if you are appearing for a Services Selection Board you must indicate active interest in some hobby like photography and fondness for sport of any kind. You must understand the psychological gains of a hobby which stimulates your mind and helps you to develop creative virtues. Through sports you have a healthy outlet for your surplus energy and your training in public cooperation team spirit power of leadership and social responsibility They want also to learn whether you relax properly to produce a healthy balanced relaxed and confident personality A solitary listless life makes a brooder out of you. They want to learn whether you can get fun out of any work or position or career you are offered and bear the role cheerfully

If you are being examined for I.A.S or other very senior responsible posts they will ask you subtle questions about your views on social problems like co-education working women Hindu Code Bill equal share to sisters, political issues like States Reorganisation Commission, Ideology Centralism or Decentralisation and discover whether you are a born fascist or conservative person or revolting reactionary or a man of balanced personality with liberal views and a high sense of loyalty to your Constitution.

For I.A.S etc. you will also be asked some provocative questions and questions expressing violent disagreement and

cross-examination to reveal your inner working of mind and draw you out.

They will also put you questions as to your intellectual pursuit and knowledge and grasp of international national and socio-political problems we are all facing This will indicate whether you are a socially conscious responsible citizen or a brooding self-centered potential schezoid or person unfit to take a position of social responsibility

Present circumstances You will be asked questions about your personal life whether you are married with children or you are a young man living with parents and in search of a career They will want to know your mode of living and ask questions about your job whether travelling sedantry isolated or with opportunities to handle men. This will give a clue to your Motivation. The difference from how you started your life and where you have arrived gives a most striking indication of your style of life and reveals the pattern of your character

Such a biographical style interview will need at least 30 minutes for each candidate and is adopted for important jobs like Defence Service and Civil Service jobs and I.A.S

General interview Alternate to biographical style is the general type which is generally resolved when the number of candidates is large the jobs small and time per candidate hardly 5 7 minutes. This type is suitable for clerical, and all subordinate services whether in the government departments or in private firms.

Here you will be asked some general questions. A beginning may be made with your present job your pay and why you want to leave or change it. If you are a young candidate they will ask questions about your school or college your professional training and what are you doing today Also what other efforts are you making to improve your qualifications Also what other jobs you are trying to get. They will ask you *what you will do if you are not selected. They might ask* you some questions on current affairs and also present national problems. They might also ask you why you want to take up

this career what special interest you have in the job. You will also be asked what are your aims of life and immediate plans They will question you on your personal hobbies and interests in life.

The rounding off the interview The interview will after proceeding at a high pitch not be terminated suddenly but you will be gradually brought to its natural end. You will be given some indication that the Board does not want to ask any more questions therefore, you should be tactful to get leave from them after thanking them. You should not stick to your chair like a leach but if you have any specific questions to ask or any information to seek or give you should do quietly and confidently and beg leave of them in a normal manner

After the interview you should try to analyse your interview and make your own estimate of this. But this should not make you nervous or unduly anxious. You should not lose balance but proceed with your normal work as usual.

The final report. As already briefly dealt under Board Interview there are two scientific methods of preparing your final report.

1 Your free form of report or pen picture in which you will be given marks. This is done when a large number of candidates have to be dealt with.

2 Expressing your results in a Rating Scale such forms are to be applied to very senior Specialised and Technical posts like those of Directors Assistant Directors, Engineers.

Basic career Whatever the scale employed the Basic prerequisites of all reports are :—

1 **Record** :—Comments about his career and achievements. This will indicate you (a) how far have you developed in relation to your environment, (b) the degree of advantage you have taken of your opportunities and (c) participated in the activities available to you.

2. **Present efficiency** —An assessment of efficiency with which you are handling your present post or career

3 **Personality** —A fair picture of your style of life and your personality structure including your interest and ambitions in life.

4 **Promise** —An evolution about the role or degree of responsibility you can bear and the job you can carry out and the career you can put in taking into consideration your ability motivation and the life-goals

I Pen Picture Report.

The advantage that the pen picture report has is that it ensures including of the essential biographical data and dispenses with or covers the shortcomings of the application form Such a form is generally used for Boards like Services Selection Board and I.A.S and other Central Services and Provincial Service

The form of Interview Report recommended by Ansley and Mercer both of Royal Institute of Public Administration is given on the opposite page

Interview comments or remarks must cover the four points indicated in the form (i) Record, (ii) Present Efficiency (iii) Personality and (iv) Promise

II Rating Scale.

There are two rating scales generally employed by Indian and British Selection Boards (a) One for higher specialised top class posts and (b) for a wide variety of posts. Here Seven point scale recommended by Ansley covering the following points is used

1 Bearing and address
2. Clarity of expression.
3 Quickness in uptake
4 Technical knowledge.
5 Range and depth of interests.
6 Initiative.
7 Attitude towards job.

Here the highest values on each point are put on left side, and the poorest on the right extreme, the meeting in the middle

INTERVIEW REPORT A

Job Applied for

Date of Interview
Name af Interviewer

Identification

Name Age Sex

Present & Previous Employment (in order of dates) Nature. Organisation 1 Pay Dates 2. .. .. Pay Dates 3.	Comments
Education and Training Schools Dates School Exam. Passed Distinctions. .. Since School Universities & Colleges Nature of Training or Degree 1 .. 2. Final Qualifications Dates	Comments of Interviewer
Family Background. Family Record .. Parents .... Children.	Comments
Interests Leisure & Health ..	Motivation. Adjustment ..
Appearance, Manner & First impression.	Comments. ..
General topics, current affairs and socio-political problem discussions	Test Results ..
Kind of work for which best suited & general remarks	Marks.

FIVE FOLD GRADING

	E Grade	D Grade	C Grade	B Grade	A Grade
First Impression	Unkept & badly dressed, rough in speech & manner	Rather scruffy & untidy about details slovenly in speech & awkward manners	Reasonably neat & tidy but undistinguished correct speech quite at ease on own ground	Very well turned out & carefully dressed, well spoken with attractive friendly manners	Perfectly turned out distinguished appearance, very ; pleasant voice with charming manners
alifications	No regular school or technical training	Left school and learnt some trade	Completed school Has done college degree but no special qualifications	Done college and school, very well with training in general job	Had university & professional training for managerial job
	Can tackle simple odd jobs	Can take routine clerical jobs under supervision	Can responsibly take up routine jobs and can learn skilled specialist work	Able to plan supervise and guide others in technical or administrative work	Capable to plan creative projects, and inspire large scale co-operation

Motivation	General disintegration, shifting	Goals either below or above approach. No willingness to work for them	Sets medium goals realising personal capacity and works honestly to gain then.	Aims high and seeks high opportunities, can take responsibility for others. Has leadership	Aims highest with immense self confidence sure of one self to achieve high goal
Adjustment	Mentally sluggish and shifting	Dull and prosaic, has to be supervised	Normally social can share and take social responsibility	Takes leading part in social activities can keep balance in crisis and feel responsibility	Born. leader takes social responsibility in a natural manner

position sought. Scoring is not on the basis of "right" or "wrong" but on a sliding scale of values ranging from "not passable" to "outstanding" As a matter of fact, it is possible to achieve a relatively low score without a single incorrect answer because of evident weakness in the qualities being measured.

Occasionally an examination may consist entirely of an oral test—either an individual or a group oral. In such cases information is sought concerning the technical knowledge and abilities of the candidate, since there has been no written examination for this purpose More commonly however an oral test is used to supplement a written examination.

Who Conducts Interviews ?

The composition of oral boards varies among different jurisdictions. In nearly all, a representative of the personnel department serves as chairman One of the members of the board may be a representative of the department in which the candidate would work In some cases outside experts are used and frequently a business man or some other representative of the general public is asked to serve. Labor and management or other special group may be represented. The aim is to secure the services of experts in the appropriate field.

However the board is composed, it is a good idea (and not at all improper or unethical) to ascertain in advance of the interview who the members are and what groups they represent. When you are introduced to them, you will have some idea of their backgrounds and interests and at least you will not stutter and stammer over their names

What to do Before the Interview ?

While knowledge about the board members is useful and takes some of the surprise element out of the interview there is other preparation which is more substantive. It is possible to prepare for an oral—in several ways

1 Keep a copy of your application and review it carefully before the interview This may be the only document

before the oral board and the starting point of the interview Know what experience and education you have listed there and the sequence and dates of it. Sometimes the board will ask you to review the highlights of your experience for them you should not have to hem and haw doing it.

2. Study the class specification and the examination announcement. Usually the oral board has one or both of these to guide them The qualities charcteristics, or knowledge required by the position sought are stated in these documents. They offer valuable clues as to the nature of the oral interview For example, if the job involves supervisory responsibilities the announcement will usually indicate that knowledge of modern supervisory methods and the qualifications of the candidate as a supervisor will be tested. If so you can expect such questi ons frequently in the form of a hypothetical situation which you are expected to solve Never go into an oral without knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of the job you seek

3 Think through each qualification required. Try to visualize the kind of questions you would ask if you were a board member How well could you answer them? Try especially to appraise your own knowledge and background in each area measured against the job sought, and identify any areas in which you are weak. Be critical and realistic—don t flatter yourself

4 Do some general reading in areas in which you feel you may be weak. For example, if the job involves supervision and your past experience has not some general reading in supervisory methods and practices, particularly in the field of human relations might be useful. Don t study agency procedu res or detailed manuals The oral board will be testing your understanding and capacity not your memory

5 Get a good night s sleep and watch your general health and mental attitude You ll want a clear head at the interview Take care of a cold or other minor ailment, and of course no hangovers

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Usually the chairman of the board will open the interview by reviewing the highlights of your education and work experience from your application—primarily for the benefit of the other members of the board, as well as to get the material into the record. Don't interrupt or comment unless there is an error or significant misinterpretation; if so, don't hesitate. But don't quibble about insignificant matters. Usually, also, he will ask you some questions about your education, your experience, or your present job—partly to get you started talking, to establish the interviewing rapport. He may start the actual questioning, or turn it over to one of the other members. Frequently each member undertakes the questioning on a particular area, one in which he is perhaps most competent. So you can expect each member to participate in the examination. And because the time is limited, you may expect some rather abrupt switches in the direction the questioning takes. Don't be upset by it. Normally, a board member will not pursue a single line of questioning unless he discovers a particular strength or weakness.

After each member has participated, the chairman will usually ask if any member has any further questions, then will ask you if you have anything you wish to add. Unless you are expecting this question, it may floor you. Or worse, it may start you off on an extended, extemporaneous speech. The board is not usually seeking more information. The question is principally to offer you a last opportunity to present further qualifications or to indicate that you have nothing to add. So if you feel that a significant qualification or characteristic has been overlooked, it is proper to point it out in a sentence or so. Don't compliment the board on the thoroughness of their examination—they've been sketchy, and they know it. If you wish, merely say, "No thank you, I have nothing further to add." This is a point where you can "talk yourself out" of a good impression or fail to present an important bit of information. Remember, you close the interview yourself.

The chairman will then say "That's all, Mr Smith, thank you" Don't be startled the interview is over and quicker than you think. Say "Thank you and good morning," gather up your belongings and take your leave Save your sigh of relief for the other side of the door

How to put your Best Foot Forward ?

Throughout all this process you may feel that the board individually and collectively is trying to pierce your defenses, to seek out your hidden weaknesses and to embarrass and confuse you. Actually this is not true They are obliged to make an appraisal of your qualifications for the job you are seeking and they want to see you in your best light. Remember they must interview all candidate and a non-cooperative candidate may become a failure in spite of their best efforts to bring out his qualifications Here are some suggestions that will help you.

1 Be natural. Keep your attitude confident, but not cocky If you are not confident that you can do the job don't expect the board to be. Don't apologize for your weaknesses, try to bring out your strong points The board is interested in a positive not a negative presentation. Cockiness will antagonize any board member and make him wonder if you are covering up a weakness by a false show of strength.

2. Get comfortable but don't lounge or sprawl. Sit erectly but not stiffly A careless posture may lead the board to conclude you are careless in other things or at least that you are not impressed by the importance of the occasion to you. Either conclusion is natural, even if incorrect. Don't fuss with your clothing or with a pencil or an ash tray Your hands may occasionally be useful to emphasize a point don't let them become a point of distraction.

3 Don't wisecrack or make small talk. This is a serious situation, and your attitude should show that you consider is as such. Further the time of the board is limited they don't want to waste it and neither should you.

4 Don t exaggerate your experience or abilities. In the first place from information in the application, from other interviews and other sources, the board may know more about you than you think In the second place you probably won t get away with it in the first place. An experienced board is rather adept at spotting such a situation. Don t take the chance.

5 If you know a member of the board, don t make a point of it, yet don t hide it. Certainly you re not fooling him, and probably not the other members of the board. Don't try to take advantage of your acquaintanceship—it will probably bounce back on you.

6 Don t dominate the interview Let the board do that. They will give you the clues—don t assume that you have to do all the talking. Realize that the board has a number of questions to ask you and don t try to take up all the interview time by showing off your extensive knowledge of the answer to the first one.

7 Be attentive. You only have twenty minutes or so and you should keep your attention at its sharpest throughout. When a member is addressing a problem or a question to you, give him your undivided attention. Address your reply principally to him but don t exclude the other members of the board.

8 Don t interrupt. A board member may be stating a problem for you to analyse. He will ask you a question when the time comes. Let him state the problem and wait for the question.

9 Make sure you understand the question. Don t try to answer until you are sure what the question is. If it s not clear restate it in your own words or ask the board member to clarify it for you. But don t haggle about minor elements.

10. Reply promptly but not hastily A common entry on oral board rating sheets is candidate responded readily" or "candidate hesitated in replies. Respond as promptly and quickly as you can, but don t jump to a hasty ill-considered answer

HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN INTERVIEW

By

JOGINDAR SINGH

No one gets a post without being interviewed and handling the interviewer successfully Our initial efforts were aimed at getting an interview call from the employer But it is only in the interview that you actually succeed in getting the job.

Many people who are well qualified for a job fail to get at the interview time One of the reasons is that though they work hard to get an interview call they are unprepared for simple questions like 'Well, Mr Nag, tell me something about yourself or "What kind of position are you looking for? They assume that they will have [illegible] to build up their case, and they will be able to [illegible] effectively Others have a faulty concept about [illegible] interview situation. Some submit to [illegible] submit to a specialist s scrutiny [illegible] Others behave as though [illegible] and others as though [illegible] Some acquire [illegible] the old tricks of the [illegible] grin, extrovert he [illegible] up a pose as if they are the I'll be-glad-to- [illegible]

Its only when [illegible] and effectively that [illegible] Because they know wh[illegible] for it well. They have [illegible] bring out all the [illegible] cross-examination. T[illegible] are ready to take the [illegible]

seem interested in getting the job in offering definite evidence of their ability to handle it and in taking advantage of every opportunity to bring out their best points. They seem confident natural and at ease They take the interviewers as human beings and sympathetic ones at that They know how much of their case has been brought out at every step and how much ground is yet to be covered they try to devote some time to each important point and then go on to the next and without getting bogged down or sidetracked.

We can acquire competence in handling the interviewers through a number of small and large things all of which we shall discuss in the section. We will deal with ways to improve your chances *before during and after the interview*

The important fact which must be understood during this discussion is that you will not have unlimited opportunities to talk with the interview Board. While acquiring proper qualifications you have planted hundreds of seeds in the expectation that a few will grow and bear fruit. So you must place a high value on every opportunity which gives you a chance to talk to a prospective employer about your specific points of merit

It should therefore be clear that the interview is not the place to experiment. You get too few chances to correct your mistakes.

I Preparation for the Interview

We shall start with the things for which you can prepare yourself in advance First of all, get all the information that you can, about (a) the post for which you will be interviewed (b) the personnel of the interviewing board. This is sometimes very difficult, and may not be possible at all, but you must make an attempt.

(a) The Details of the Post

Without a clear idea of the standards you will have to meet you will be at a disadvantage in bringing out your best points and qualifications. You may overemphasize factors

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Its only when people handle the interviews smoothly and effectively that they land the job they go after Why? Because they know what is expected of them and are prepared for it well. They have prepared themselves in advance to bring out all the salient facts clearly and logically without cross-examination. They cooperate with the interviewer and are ready to take the initiative if it is offered to them. They

trial and error out of the way before the real interview starts. One way of doing it is to rehearse the interview in advance. By a rehearsal I mean finding one or two friends preferably your colleagues who will be willing to spend an hour or so firing questions at you about your qualifications and experience

There is a great difference between what a man has in his head and what he is able to spit out You may know your own life like a book, but do a bad job of telling your life story Defect results out of your faulty communication Thus communication consists of taking facts out of your own head and getting them clearly into the interviewer s. You can do this at the interview only by extemporaneously putting them into words and dealing with the facts in whatever sequence the questions of the interviewer will permit. And chances are he ll seem to jump all over the lot without much regard for the way in which you have arranged these facts in your own mind

But if you can sit down with a couple of friends and pass on to them your resume and ask them to pretend they are interviewing you for various kinds of jobs, for various kinds of firms, and let them question you you will get practice at the art of communicating facts about yourself You will work out your errors without harm to your job prospects. They should not ask you for facts like your age or dates of employment but should try to dig up some really tough questions. They can ask Since this is a small post, Mr and has limited opportunities what do you think would be the advantage of working here ?' And when you have worked out an answer to that one, let them switch the situation and ask, "Since this is a senior post Mr and you might get lost in the work, what do you think would be the prospects of your success here ? There can be any number of such basically important questions, each turned upside down in the next question. Mr don t you think a man younger than you would be more suitable for *our job ?*' and Mr *don t you think a man older* than you would be more suitable ?

It is better to think over the question for a moment and give a good direct response than to come out with the first thing that comes into your head Tension and overanxiety will tend to make you start answering questions before you have thought about them—sometimes before you have thought about them —sometimes before the question is finished. If you are—and if you feel—well prepared to talk about yourself you will be less prone to this kind of error

At the Reception Office

The interview actually starts in the reception room as far as you are concerned Several things occur there that deserve your attention It is sometimes the practice to have applicants fill a personality questionnaire while in the waiting room before they are interviewed. Do a careful job The interviewer is usually going to look at the application and proforma before he looks at you, and from it he will begin to form his all-important first impressions of you.

You will learn that your rehearsal has begun to pay off even at this early stage Your resume which should be attached to the application will help you to answer most of the questions on the employment form factually and accurately And if unexpected questions are encountered, your "rehearsal sessions should have prepared you somewhat to deal with them.

In addition to the application form, many offices have literature about the office laid out on the waiting room tables. While waiting take advantage of the opportunity to study these and prime yourself with facts about the post—facts that might be quite useful in the interview

A waiting period also gives you an opportunity for that last glance at your resume and at yourself to make sure that everything is in order Finally you must resolve that you are going to like the man or woman who will interview you and also that you are going to win them over This involves a little bit of mental practice but it often pays well Make up your

mind that you are going to say the nicest things to the person with whom you will be talking and not to look for things you can criticize. Look for the things you will find pleasing We can all feel when we are making a good personal impression and if you have a favourable inner response to the interviewer you meet, he or she will sense it in a subtle way and respond to it in turn. This is the secret good interpersonal relationships, and it is often the spark that produces warmth in the interview

The Interview Board Room

Now the Board is ready to see you and you are ushered into the Board room. You may be interviewed by a small board in a small room or a high power board in a big hall. What ever the situation determine to do your best regardless of the setting of the interview board.

Interview Starts

If the interviewers are ready and waiting for you introduce yourself Sometimes an interviewers have name plates on their desk, and from it you can tell at a glance whom you are addressing Remember that the interview has begun the moment you walk into the office. Your appearance has already told them something Now they are going to hear your voice and your manner of speaking They may ask your name so start with 'Good Morning, sirs; My name is

Play Safe

Regarding your mode of salutation the best advice is always to play safe. If the interviewer appears to be expecting a handshake, by all means shake his hand If you are facing a big board where a handshake is difficult to manage don t force it by holding your hand out but wish them with folded hands. Follow their lead.

If the Board appears to expect you to take a seat do so without making a fuss about it. If you are not sure whether or not he does expect you to be seated remain standing for a moment until the situation becomes clear

pattern of questions. You will be able to recognize the type of interviewers you have met within a moment or two after the conversation begin, usually by the first question they will ask.

If the opening questions are specific and factual, the inter view will usually follow a more or less systematic progression, taking up your past career job by job, and disposing of each part before going on to the next. It will usually consist of a series of related questions moving from one point to another.

This kind of questioning almost always indicates inter viewers who are following a definite line of development. It foreshadows an interview that will be closely directed by the interviewer. Let us call this the *continuous interview* because each question seems to grow out of the proceeding on in a continuous series.

(b) Free flowing Interview

This type of interview is distinctively different, and much more free-flowing. The questions are more general and they throw the ball to you from the beginning. It might open with such questions as Well Mr tell us something about yourself. Or "What kind of work have you been doing?" Or What made you decide to apply to this career?

Or the quest oning can begin in a more personal way "How did you like working for the ? Or What made you decide to leave your last job? Or Do you intend to continue your studies after this post?

Regardless of the direction in which the ball is first thrown, you are expected to carry on with it, and keep running until you score a touchdown, or are intercepted. Questions of this sort are an implied invitation to tell the Board about yourself in your own way. They result in an entirely different type of interview which we shall informally call the *free-flowing interview*.

To handle the free-flowing interview on the line with the continuous line interview could be disastrous. If for example in answer to the question, How do you like your present job you were to reply Fine and lose the opportu

nity to make your contribution to the interview you would be turning the interview back to the interviewer .. and leaving it to him to dig up another question for you The free flowing interview is not like a tennis match, where the trick is to return the ball as fast as it comes to you. It is like a football game where the object is to hold on to the ball and try to keep running with it until you score. However your freedom to continue talking exists only as long as the interviewer prefers to remain silent. When he breaks in, stop talking and start listening

Be alert as the interview begins to detect the kind of interview it is likely to be and then act accordingly The two board classifications illustrate nothing scientific but they are two important extremes calling for two entirely different kinds of answers on your part. In both cases it is possible for you to control the interview to a greater or lesser degree.

Controlling the Continuous Line Interview

Its very nature gives the clue If the interviewer is following a certain line of development, where each question is suggested by the answers to the preceding question, then the answers themselves can be used to suggest the next questions.

These elementary examples of replies that actually lead the questioner to inquire about something you want to bring out and that bring out something more than the question called for

Thus, with a continuous-line interviewer who is formulating his questions rapidly and who seems to prefer direct and brief answers to indirect questions it is possible to influence the course of his questions while giving him the facts he wants. Further a continuous line interviewer who sees that you are prepared to give him coherent, orderly and systematic set of facts, will begin to give you greater latitude in your responses. Nothing pleases an interviewer more than having the applicant bring out all the pertinent facts, just as he wants them, without prolonged questioning. Here is where your advance preparation pays rich dividends.

in which to state your time and making the most of it while you can. If you do get more time consider yourself fortunate, but it should be dangerous to assume that you will get more.

If we accept this rule based on concrete experience on types of the interview you will better take every opportunity during the interview to bring out any additional qualifying factors that you want to present to the board.

There is another point about which you can profit greatly by rehearsal. It is the awareness of your reason for being in the interview room Never forget that you are there to impress about your fitness for the job Anything you might do or say that does not bear directly upon that purpose is a dead loss.

The board members especially if the board is a small one sometimes become so engrossed in a story an applicant is telling that they forget for a while that they are off the subject Unfortunately the appl cant seems to feel when this happens that he is achieving a great deal merely by holding attention that long even though what he is telling has nothing to do with his qualifications for the job He is quite mistaken of course, because when they realize how much time they have spent with this man they try to speed up the remainder of the interview and bring it to a close It would have been better for the applicant not to have lured the board off the subject of his qualifications and miss the aim of the interview

Keep on the Track

It is important therefore for you to control your time so that you have finished your story and told it well, in the ten minutes you can reasonably expect to get. This can best be done by using every point as a springboard for the next one. You can do this by avoiding getting stuck up in one aspect of your personality at the cost of something else equally important. Each aspect of your qualifications should be described so as to leave an opening for getting into the next if you have the chance. You will not be able probably to bring out all of

the facts in the sequence in which you want to present them. You must be able to go from any point to any other point, at the interviewer's convenience but every time you speak you must add something to what you have already said.

And if you or the interviewer get off the track of your qualifications, find a way to get back at the ea liest possible moment. This requires not only tact but also a complete and unerring knowledge of what you are saying This again brings out importance of studying the resume and rehearsing the interview

Learning the Nature of the Job

The entire interview is meant to constitute an examination of your personality and qualifications. Sometimes, if the Board is small one they are willing to tell you the essential facts about the job for which you are applying So there emerges a sort of duality about your role in the interview All the same, you will know less about your prospective employer than he will know about you and try to do your best to convince the Board of your fitness for the post but sometimes the situation causes applicants to try to interview the interviewers to cross examine him about the post, to become standoffish and to play hard to-get. And, just when the applicant, by these tactics succeeds in eliciting enough information to become convinced that he really wants that job, the interviewers have decided that the applicant is too choosy or particular or temperamental. You must never forget the fact that the burden is upon you, the job-seeker and to the job rather than upon the interviewer to "sell you the post. Some interviewers will encourage you to talk about your ambitions and desires but that is because they want to find out whether your ambitions and desires can be satisfied by the post. And, the more extravagantly you speak about your aspirations the less chance the post will have to fulfill them.

Therefore please remember that first things always come first. You can always reject a job that has been offered to you, but you cannot accept a job that is never offered to you. There-

fore, the first thing you must do is to convince the Board, in every way you can, that you are going to be a fine addition to the organization. Once they have reached that conclusion, you can explore the question of what the post might offer you. But the invariably mistaken tactic is to put the second thing first to try find out first whether you will like the job and then try to get it. That rarely if ever works

Bring out Your Strong Points

The only way you can convince the Board of your suitability is to talk of what you have to offer So in answer to every question, and in every thing you say to them, you must keep bringing out favourable factors. When you have brought out a strong point, you should not rest your entire case on it. You should keep on bringing out fresh facts small and large to make the score pile up. Avoid spending all of your interview time on one or two major points By keeping the ten-minute limitation in mind and by knowing all times how much more ground must still be covered before your case is fully presented you will be conscious of the necessity of keeping the interview moving forward from one favourable point to another

A favourable point is a reason why you should be selected. If the post needs the ability to meet strangers readily you should display your sociability and extrovert nature and your past experience of handling men, and your ability to talk to strangers.

Knowing Half way Reaction

A remarkable thing happens during an interview usually at about the half way—which you can almost see happening The interviewers start with an open mind and begin to formulate their opinion of you very quickly After you have gone about halfway they are no longer openminded, but are definitely tending toward a favourable reaction or an unfavourable one. The remainder of the interview is likely to be a process of confirmation. *If they feel like selecting* you, they look *for* factors to confirm their favourable judgment. As you sense

thus you should become more alert to give every scrap of additional material they require. If they tend toward an unfavourable reaction, take a quick mental inventory of your presentation up to that point and if you have failed by then to bring out any major factor get to it at once. Only determined efforts will help you if the interview is not going favourably.

The interviewers rarely act on pure whim. They must usually have a reason for arriving at their decision whatever the decision might be. Even if they decide to reject you they want to have their conclusions upon something specific. In the second part of the interview therefore, they look for a definite basis upon which to justify their decision.

Terms of Service

It is in the latter part of the interview that the subject of remuneration should be discussed. In actual practice, if the question of compensation is open, the interviewers will attempt to get to it early in the game. They will want to know what kind of salary you are expecting to get. But if you can put off talking about pay until you have made your most favourable impression you will be in an advantageous bargaining position. Your price might not seem so high once they feel impressed by you.

But sooner or later you are going to get down to brass-tacks. So when you get to this point at which you will have to mention a figure, don't mention a specific one. State your expectations in terms of a range. And put up a condition. This still leaves you some room for negotiation. You can express it that way: "Well, Sir ... I had in mind a position in the five to six hundred rupee range, depending upon the level of responsibility involved. This tact still leaves you free to negotiate upward from five or compromise downward from six, depending upon how badly you want the job and how badly the Board wants you. And it leaves your basic "level of responsibility" and opportunity for advancement" or whatever condition you specified, in any way that best suits your purpose.

End of the Interview

In interviewing Boards will conduct repeat interviews starting with a comparatively large group and bringing back the favoured candidates once or more until all but top candidates have to be selected. So you will not get a definite decision on your application at the end of the first interview. Therefore you must make some definite provision at the conclusion of the interview concerning the future course of action that may be expected of you.

Usually the interviewers will volunteer this information. They close the interview by saying for example, 'Well Mr we expect to make a decision shortly If you are selected, we will get in touch with you.

If the Board is small and jobs one or two the candidate can ask at the conclusion of the interview how and when his application will be decided upon Try wherever possible, to pin this down to a specific date and time and failing that, ask whether it will be permissible for you to enquire again, specially if you are applying in a British or American firm.

If he says a decision will be made on Thursday phone him on Thursday to learn whether the decision was actually made. Sometimes a new development has occurred that changes the picture entirely If you are the second choice candidate and the first choice man has already found another job your phone call may land the job on the spot. You can accept it as a rule that it is never improper to show an interest in getting the job you applied for Finally in the case of business house jobs, you should acknowledge and express appreciation for every interview that you are granted A brief note from you the day after an interview is always welcome

METHODS OF SELECTING OFFICERS FOR THE ARMED FORCES

PRESIDENT SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

My purpose is to tell you briefly about the modern scientific methods employed by the Services Selection Boards for the selection of officers in the Defence Services.

This system is neither new nor untried. I do not claim that our system is perfect but I do very definitely suggest that it is the fairest available. Broadly speaking, there are two main methods of selection which are practised in most modern coutries,

(a) one is by examination and personal interview and
(b) the other is the more scientific method put in use now by the Services Selection Boards, which I shall describe later.

I suggest to you that the examination and interview method is not a satisfactory one. The vagaries of examination are only too well-known, to be gone into detail. If you are able to burn the midnight oil you will pass examination. The interview by itself can serve but little purpose—the interviewers are liable to be biased. This may appear to be sweeping statement but the fact remains that everyone of us has a type he likes and the type he dislikes. Senior officers and public men, especially those with strong personality know what they want, and seldom think much of a candidate who does not fit in with their own particular type. An experiment was made some time ago when 14 interviewers all very senior and highly respected, were individually made to interview 60 candidates for a particular job. The result was revealing. Not one single candidate was passed unanimously and not one was rejected unanimously. This shows that any candidate would have passed or failed according to the view of the man who was interviewing him.

Ordeal of the Interview

Our main job is to select candidates for various courses of the Armed Forces Academy. We therefore see boys between the ages of 15 and 0. Let us first see what would happen to a young boy who may have to go before the commonly known, Interview Board after passing an examination, for which he had spent possibly a number of sleepless nights cramming. On the day of his interview having been kept waiting nervously in a room, huddled with a number of others of his own type his name is called. He goes forward shaking from top to bottom, to be confronted by 4 or 5 members of the Board. They are all men, much older than he himself senior officers and non-officials men with a lot of prestige, of long experience of life and official affairs sitting comfortably at a table in judgment upon him. He has about 20 minutes in which to convince them of his worth and ability and what is more difficult, the likelihood of his developing under instruction. I am certain you will agree it is a formidable ordeal. It is, of course, the object of the Board to find out the best in the lad. This is very difficult indeed for even the most sympathetic man to find the best in anyone in the odd twenty minutes. This is particularly so when the candidate is faced with the ordeal, I have already described. No candidate can be his normal self in such circumstances. A few may perhaps show their best but the majority will suffer from nervousness in one form or another and the Board can do little more than guess at their potentiality.

The New Method

Now let us turn our attention to the methods employed by us. The candidate is called to the place where his test will be carried out and is lodged in Mess where he is treated as the officer he hopes to be.

On the first day he is left to himself to settle down in his new surroundings and to get to know something at least of other candidates and of the officers who form the selection Board. To further help the candidates, the President and the members of

the Board work in civilian clothes so that the candidates are not overawed by military uniforms and rank.

Then the tests begin. They cover three to four days nor 20 minutes. They include individual discussions and a private and each member of the Board. In all these interviews the object of the examining officer is to put the candidate at his ease and so to get him to talk freely and frankly and thus to reveal his personality and ability. These are simple tests, for basic intelligence and practical commonsense not of education not of book learning but of the natural flexibility and adaptability of the mind. There are group tests to see how a candidate works with his fellows and what qualities of leadership he possesses. All these tests which I shall describe in detail later have been devised after much careful thought and many experiments.

The proof of the pudding, they say is in the eating from statistics collected over a number of years, we find that the failure rate at the Training Institution has come down to 1/4th of what it was, when the old system was practised.

Wastage at the Indian Military Academy at the beginning of the war was 30 per cent. This percentage at all the Officers Training Schools put together rose to 47 per cent in 1942. In 1946 after the new system had been introduced, the wastage at the Training establishments was 10 per cent. The wastage for the post war course at the I.M.A. is about 18 per cent and is steadily coming down. Another useful indication is provided at the end of the four-day test, when each candidate is asked to comment on the methods used, and to say if he had a fair deal. The comments are written after the results have been prepared, but before they are announced the candidates are told that their comments will not be read until after the results have been sent by the Board to the Army Headquarters. The prevailing note, in all comments which are given freely and without any fear by candidates shows that they were highly satisfied with the methods adopted.

In our Selection Board's working of the system of scientific selection, we have an average of about 75 per cent unanimity of opinion on candidates To be fair to all types our selectors are taught to send their own personality and are trained to judge purely on performance and ability I maintain that this system is the fairest that is available because the Selection Board neither select nor reject the candidates They merely grade the candidates on the qualities they should possess as prospective officers in the Armed forces The gradings awarded range from 1 to 7

I must emphasise that our Selection Board merely judge candidates from the point of view of their suitablity for service in the Armed Forces only We might fail a candidate who may be a scholar possibly a B.A. or M A. of a first class University This however will not be a reflection on him or his education, for as we know different walks of life To illustrate this point I will quote the example of a gentleman who was once rejected for Army but is today a flourishing businessman. He was grateful to us for rejecting him, he admits that he NEVER really was interested in the Army which he desired to join merely because he wanted a job

The present system of scientific selection was started in Germany soon after the first World War when the German Army was reduced to a total strength of 100 000. They selected every soldier by this method Each man was picked carefuly and as a result, when Hitler decided to expand the army each of these men was found fit not only to be promoted to officer rank but they built up in five years the finest fighting machine the world had ever known. The Americans also adopted it and improved upon it. The U.K more conservative did not follow suit till early in 1944 and the same system was introduced in India later that year

Details of the Method

The object of Selection Board is to collect evidence about a candidate in the past and present and to review its relevance towards assessing his potentialities as an officer

The Board consists of a senior Service officer as President and to assist him in his talk he has trained Selectors such as his Deputy a Psychologist, with a first class qualification in general psychology a Psychiatrist, the group Testing Officers and Pointer Writers.

The period of testing is spread over four days during which time a number of tests are administered.

Indoor Tests

Indoor tests are designed to assess the total personality of a candidate The tests comprise of intelligence test, personality test, and special aptitude test. There are also two questionnaires in which the whole background of the candidate is extracted. From the answers to various questions, it is judged how far a candidate s present pattern of living would fit him in the Armed Service We call this a pointer' The 'pointer is then passed to the Psychiatrist who interviews the candidate and gives his own final grading based on the pointer and the interview

Outdoor Tests

For outdoor tests candidates are split up in small teams of about eight members. Each team works with a separate Group Officer We call him a Group Testing Officer The tests last about two days and include discuss on a short talk by each candidate Planning Exercise and tests of physical and mental fitness.

All these tests are simple commonsense problems which require no particular type of education, but they do bring out qualities of leadership practical intelligence commonsense initiative physical endurance team spirit, all of which are most essential qualities to make good officer On the result of these the Group Testing Officer writes a very comprehensive report bringing in out whether the cand date possesses these qualities or not and the degree-thereof The group Testing Officer finally admits only those traits which are confirmed as trends and not mere traces. He then gives his grading

The Interview

This is probably the least important part of all the tests and is carried out by the President or the Deputy President. Its object is to corroborate or otherwise the impressions made upon these two senior officers who have closely watched the candidates during all the other tests.

At the end of four days testing and interviewing all the selectors meet in a conference Upto this time all of them except the Psychiatrist have looked at the candidate independently The Psychiatrist has been shown the results of the written psychological tests. Like any other scientific findings findings of one selector are checked and confirmed by the findings of others. Each selector writes out a report on the candidate, and each case is considered purely on its merits. In cases of diversity of opinion the candidate's performance before the Board is threshed out fully and the President finally gives a grading which is acceptable to majority of members, after discussion. This is not a question of the sum of the grades given being divided by the number of officers giving the grades. It may well be that depending upon the outstanding characteristics going in favour or against a candidate he may receive a grade 3 or grade 7 For example out of 175 candidates that were selected for course recently 26 had actually received the lowest grading from the Psychiatrist.

The candidate however is not given the reason for rejection by the Board in his own interest because in the majority of cases Selection Board tests reveal certain basic deficiencies in their personality make-up which render them unsuitable for military career Most of these deficiencies are so fundamental that they cannot be altered while others can only be corrected by a prolonged course of intensive training and re-education by technical experts. This knowledge of irremediable defects would only fill the candidate with a sense of inadequacy which would even hinder the full use of his positive qualities in other spheres of life

Before I close I would like to say that the present methods of selection are not claimed to be perfect and indeed they are continually being improved. But they are a great advance on the past. They offer a very good measure of assessing human personality. They are economical in manpower because they find the best man and put him in the right place. They eliminate the factors of race, creed, religion and influence and, therefore they are democratic.

Talking about influence I would like to sound a warning to all, high and low who are in the habit of approaching the Selection Directorate Personnel. It would be hitting at the very foundation of our system, if any favouritism or nepotism is permitted. We have already taken various measures to stop this. Our Commander-in-Chief has issued strict instructions and these have already been publicised through the Press that candidates trying to exert influence by any manner or means will be summarily rejected and any such attempt by officers, either civil or military will be at once brought to the notice of the higher authorities. These orders are most loyally obeyed by all of us, connected with selection duties.

In conclusion I would like to stress that the selection of officers for the Armed Forces is a sacred duty and a very heavy responsibility—for in the hands of an officer depend the lives of the men under his command—and on the Armed Forces, depend the honour and security of the country. We have, therefore only one claim in view—efficiency. All other considerations must and will be subordinated to that aim. We must select the very best and nothing less than the best can be accepted for the defence of our Motherland.

SELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE ARMED FORCES

By

SOHAN LALL

Before the Second World War selection of officers for the Armed Forces in India was made by the traditional method of a written examination in school subjects followed by an interview. The war brought on a sudden and considerable expansion of the forces and officers were needed and had to be recruited in very much large numbers. Candidates offering themselves for recruitment to the commissioned rank were so numerous that the traditional methods proved inadequate to cope with the problem. The written examination taken by a large number of candidates is necessarily a long drawn out process while the urgency of the situation demanded a very quick verdict on the candidates suitability. The written examination was therefore dropped and selections made purely on the basis of interviews. The first interview was by a provincial Selection Board and those who succeeded went before a Central Interview Board, which made the final selection.

Though this system shortened the time consumed in the process of selection, it brought into prominence a new problem. Cadets selected by interview alone showed a wastage of nearly 40 per cent at the Officers Training School. So large a wastage dislocated the plans for the expansion of the forces and some way of reducing the wastage without unduly prolonging the process of selection had to be found.

Meanwhile a method of selecting officers for the Armed Forces based on the use of techniques of applied psychology had been evolved in the United Kingdom. This method, with suitable adaptation to suit local conditions was introduced as an experimental measure in India early in 1943. An experimental

'Officers Selection Board' was set up at Dehra Dun and the new techniques employed by it were studied at first hand by senior officers of the Armed Forces and by members of the Defence Consultative Committee. By July 1943 a number of Officers Selection Boards were set up in India and the rest of the recruitment during the war was made through these Boards which were later re-designated as "Services Selection Board" (S.S.Bs.)

Until 1948 the methods used by the Selection Boards were more or less the same as those used by similar Boards in U K. Towards the end of that year the Government of India appointed a Committee to study the working of Selection Boards and to suggest ways and means for improving their efficiency The methods now employed for the selection of officers for the Armed Forces in India are largely based on the recommendations made by this Committee

II

There are broadly four main methods for selecting people for particular jobs. First there is the system of examination of candidates in school subjects. This tests their academic knowledge and attainments and also helps to some extent in the assessment of intelligence and clarity of thought and expression. However it tells nothing about whether the candidate has the requisite temperamental and other personality qualities which may be very important in the context of the particular job to be done. Secondly there is the method of the formal inter view" where a candidate is questioned by a few selectors for a period of 15 minutes to half an hour This can give only a superficial indication of academic knowledge and learning; and though it does help to give glimpses of personality traits, they are only indications and may not fully reveal the real personality A third method is that of situational tests In this technique the candidate is asked to do an elementary job similar in nature to the one he would be called upon to do if recruited. During the test he will be under observation by selectors who can see how he approaches the job how he handles himself,

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his tools and other aids and come to an assessment of how successful he is likely to prove after recruitment. The fourth method is that of 'Projective Technique This is based on the principle that no man can avoid projecting his true personality in his responses to questions and tests and situations provided the latter are properly designed and presented. A trained psychologist can always prepare from the candidate's responses a pen-picture of the various aspects of his personality

Each of the above methods has its strong and weak points. Mankind has not been able to evolve so far any single method of selection which could be rgarded as perfect. The present method of selection used by the Armed Forces in India is a combination of all the four mentioned above It is hoped that by utilising all the four different techniques and pooling the results the error in assessment of a young man's suitability for recruitment to the commissioned rank would be minimised.

Young men offering themselves for recruitment as officers in the Armed Forces have first to take a written examination in English, Mathematics and General Knowledge. Each subject carries 300 marks—a total of 900 for the whole written examination. Candidates who pass the hurdle by securing a prescribed minimum of marks in the examination are sent to the Services Selection Board for assessment of personality traits.

The S. S. B in assessing the personality of the candidates uses the methods of the Formal Interview the Situational Tests and the Projective Technique. The interview is conducted by the president of the Board sitting alone He is a senior officer with the rank of a full Colonel.

The Situational Tests are conducted by a Group Testing Officer (G.T O) The candidates have to participate in these for a couple of days. They begin with a Group Discussion, followed by a Planning Exercise in which a problem is presented to them and they have to work as a group to evolve a solution. Next they go on to the Progressive Group Task (P G T). Here

a group of candidates is generally required to carry a heavy or big object over a number of obstacles. They are given some material to help them in getting across. The group has to *think and work as a whole. It is followed by a Group Obstacles* Race (G O R.), wherein two groups, carrying a heavy object, race over several obstacles. Then comes Half Group Task in which only half the group works. The test is of the same nature as the P G T The candidates have also to do a Command Task in which they are put in command of a group and have to get the assigned work done They also go over Individual Obstacles and deliver a Lecturette Finally there is the Final Group Task which is very similar in nature to the Progressive Group Task. These tests are designed to reveal the extent to which the individual candidates possess qualities of initiative, resourcefulness decisiveness, co-operation and leadership—qualities which are essential for manning the officers cadre in the Armed Forces. While the candidates are participating in the Situational Tests the G T O observes each individual closely Each group which he watches generally consists of 8 to 10 candidates

In the Projective Technique which is administered by the Technical Officer of the S. S B. a candidate begins by answering two questionnaires in which he gives detailed information about his family background and school life He also indicates his interests his hobbies, the reading that he does apart from his text books the games he plays etc Thereafter he takes two tests of Intelligence—one verbal and the other non verbal followed by another confirmatory test in cases where a discrepancy is observable in the first two tests. Next the candidate is put through the Word Association Test, the Thematic Apperception Test and the Verbal Situation Test. This process takes one full day

After the testing has been completed each testing officer (the Interviewer the G. T O., and the Technical Officer) writes a full report on every individual candidate. The Board then meets in a conference and after discussion allots marks

to the candidates The total number of marks with the Services Selection Board is 900

Candidates who obtain the necessary qualifying marks at Services Selection Board are sent for medical examination. Candidate found medically fit are further given Physical Efficiency Tests and are awarded marks for their physical potential out of a maximum of 200

In effect, the candidate is really trying to score marks out of a maximum of 2,000 the break up being as follows —

Marks by U P.S C.	900
Marks by Services Selection Board	900
Marks by Medical Board	200
Total	2,000

The marks obtained by the candidates at the U P.S.C., S.S.B and the Medical Board are added together and a final merit list is prepared on the basis of the aggregate scored by each candidate. Selection is then made from the top of this list according to the number of vacancies available.

III

It is natural to ask 'What would happen if the same candidate went before different Boards ? Will there be any consistency in the verdict of the different Boards so far as that particular candidate is concerned ?' To answer this question an experiment was conducted All the four Boards of the Armed Forces were moved to one station. A batch of 150 young men were put through each Board separately The marks awarded by each board to these 150 candidates were then correlated The coefficient of correlation between Boards worked out to 73—an encouraging figure

In this experiment an attempt was also made to compare the marking standard of the different Boards. For this purpose, the mean mark for each Board was worked out, The figures

obtained are given below :—

Board	Mean Mark
I	371.4
II	372.1
III	365 1
IV	335.8

It will be noticed that the Boards I II and III have mean marks which are very close to each other Board IV shows a variation This is understandable as this Board was selecting candidates for the Indian Air Force and was thus applying a slightly different procedure Candidates for the Indian Air Force are also put through Pilot Aptitude Tests which are not given by Boards I II and III

As regards the validity of the present method of selection of the army officers, the three main question which arise are

(1) How has the present method of selection affected the wastage at the training institutions ?

(2) How does the assessment of the selection board compare with the performance of the candidates at the training institutions ?

(3) How does the assessment at the time of selection compare with the performance of the officers when posted to army units ?

The answer to the first question is conclusive Follow up studies have revealed that the wastage at the training institutions have dropped from 40% to about 3 or 4%

Studies have also been conducted in regard to the second issue The marks obtained by the candidates at the time of selection were correlated with the marks obtained by them at the time of passing out from the training institutions. The coefficient of correlation comes to 54 This is satisfactory figure, considering that coefficients of correlation in such studies rarely go above .2 or .3

The third issue—post recruitment performance—is still under investigation. A five-year follow up study has been launched in which the performance of the officers during the first five years of their service will be studied. Five years have

not yet been completed since this project was started Data is still pouring in.

IV

For ensuring correct and efficient use of psychological techniques employed by the Services Selection Boards it is obviously necessary to have a high-power research organisation to help them. Such an organisation exists in the Ministry of Defence and is known as the Psychological Research Wing" of Defence Science Organisation. The main functions of the research organisation are —

(1) Constructing and standardising of new tests which are used by the Services Selection Boards

(2) Training of Officers selected for posting to the Services Selection Boards in the methods of interview test administration and interpretation of results

(3) Conducting follow up studies and

(4) Conducting research to answer technical problems.

Among other things, research was needed to overcome the basic question 'What should the Services Selection Board look for in a candidate? This is how it was done. All officers of the Indian Army with the rank of full Colonel and above were requested to give their opinion about the qualities of personality which an officer of the Armed Forces should possess A large number of replies were received These answers were studied and a list of qualities was evolved. The qualities decided upon were to give only a few examples initiative organising ability resourcefulness courage ability to exert influence on a group etc A Rating Scale was prepared which was used by each member of the Selection Board while assessing candidates.

It was noticed however that quite a number of qualities in the Rating Scale overlapped. Research was conducted further to study this aspect. Two studies of Factorial Analysis were carried out on two age groups Coefficients of correlation were worked out between the different qualities and common

factors extracted by the Centroid Method. Factor Loadings for each quality were calculated Qualities showing low Factor Loading were considered for rejection. Noneless it was considered desirable to get more evidence before the revised list was finalised. The experiment conducted for assessing the reliability of the S.S.Bs produced data to show which qualities were being more reliably assessed than the others The assessment regarding a few of the qualities varied considerably from Board to Board while the assessment of other qualities showed a high degree of consistency To supplement this data the members of the Selection Boards were further asked to report on (1) The qualities which they could assess directly and confidently from the tests used, (2) The qualities which were not directly observable from the test responses, but were being inferred from other qualities For example if a candidate showed co-operativeness it could be inferred that he had team spirit too, and (3) Qualities which could not be assessed with the tests available.

On the basis of the evidence thus derived from different sources, the list of qualities of personality required in a candidate was revised. The revised list is n use now

Another important and essential work of the research organisation lies in the field of construction of tests. Although a number of tests are available in the foreign countries, they cannot always be safely used in this country The cultural differences between foreign countries and our own are likely to vitiate the test results. An example may be given to illustrate the point A western psychologist designing the test to ascertain the dgree of mother-attachment of a young lad might introduce in the Thematic Apperception Test a picture showing a young man kissing good bye to his mother at the railway station. The responses of a western or northern American candidate who is asked to give his reactions to such a picture would always reveal to the trained psychologist the extent to which abnormal or unresolved mother-attachment plays a part in his total personality Such a picture could

obviously not be used in India for the same purpose. The sight of a young man kissing his mother in public would evoke in Indian youth feelings and emotions quite different from those which a western psychologist would expect to find in a western youth. To suit the Indian conditions more reliable data might be obtained from a picture showing a young man saying good-bye to his mother by folding his hands and doing a 'Namaskar' or better still by touching her feet. Furthermore the value and validity of even the best and most reliable tests tends to be vitiated by continuous use and publicity. New tests have therefore to be constructed and validated from time to time.

Test construction is a lengthy process involving a lot of experimentation. There are various types of tests each with its own technique of construction. Tests are constructed and tried out on a population of the type on which they are subsequently meant to be used. They need a considerable amount of readjustment and comparison with existing tests before they can be finalised for selection. Normally it takes nearly two years to produce a fairly suitable test.

The above are examples of the type of research that is needed, problems of this nature are constantly arising and require answers after scientific investigation. The research organisation has to tackle these and give the answers to the boards. Experience has shown that unless the Selection Boards are backed by such an institution, they find it difficult to maintain their efficiency.

V

It has been stated earlier that each candidate is assessed by three assessors who use three different techniques namely the Formal Interview, the Situational Tests and the Projective Technique. How their assessments are correlated may be explained here. A Rating Scale giving the list of qualities required to be assessed is in possession of each assessor. The assessor puts a tick at the appropriate point on the scale. The Rating Scale is full of adjectives which are liable to be inter-

preted by different people in different ways To make a uniform assessment possible each one of these adjectives has been defined and a Glossary given to each assessor For example, resourcefulness has been defined as the capacity to improvise a solution when in a tight corner The word improvise implies that the resources are not enough and the candidate has to show his resourcefulness by finding a solution with what is available.

The different tests used by different assessors are regarded by them as one whole. They do not take the evidence from any one particular test as conclusive In the whole battery of tests which are available in the Situational Test Technique and Projective Technique there is one test which gives a good deal of information about different qualities. The information from the other tests is used to confirm or reject the hypothesis which is formed as a result of the candidate s reaction to the main test.

In the Situational Tests the main test is the Progressive Group Task. The Group Testing Officer may find that a candidate does not show enough courage The test provides for risky situation to be courted in order to obtain a solution. The G.T O may notice that a particular candidate is avoiding them and expecting other members of the group to bear the the first risk. At this stage this is only a hypothesis. The G.T O therefore carefully observes the candidate s behaviour in other similar tests, for example the Half Group Task and the Final Group Task, to see if his initial hypothesis is confirmed or not. The other two tests therefore, become confirmatory tests.

In the Projective Techique, the main test which throws out possible hypotheses to the Technical Officers is the Thematic Apperception Test. If from the responses of this test, the Technical officer has evidence that the candidate is rather retiring by nature he wants to confirm it by the other data available with him. He would look to the responses of the Word Association Test. If he finds that here too

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE INTERVIEW

If interviewing is an art it lacks all but the beginnings of an agreed explicit technique As this begins to emerge the results may be surprising And in its formation a scientific psychology will have a large part. It is one of the conclusions reached by Dr Oldfield in his invaluable book, *The Psychology of the Interview* This is one of the few publications which deals scientifically with the subject.

While in his conclusions the author observes that the last five years have contributed little to our understanding of the basic psychological processes of the interview the undermentioned conclusions which he reaches at the end are invaluable to the students of interview techniques

First the interview must be regarded not as something *sui generis* to be treated in isolation but as the purposeful utilisation in special form and circumstances, of activities and processes common to other social phenomena. The use of conversation, the expression, arousal and perception of attitudes the formation of judgments, the favourable disposition of circumstances —all go to make up the interview and each is a common feature of social life. Skill in the conduct of the interview lies in the use of each and in the combination of all in the manner best suited to the purpose in hand. It is possible therefore that, in so far as deliberate investigation is concerned these several factors may best be studied in manifestations other than the interview itself It is at least reasonable to remark that each of them demands investigation upon its own

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A review article of the book 'Psychology of the Interview' by R.C Oldfield. Published by Messrs Methuen & Co Ltd., London pp 154 Price : 7s 6d net

account, and that the proper statement of the special problems of the interview must within certain limits, await the results of this.

"*Second* the attempt to describe and to analyse the essential mechanism of the interview depends upon the choice of suitable basic terms. Two conditions ought so far as possible to be satisfied by these.—They must offer the possibility of simple description over as wide a field as possible And they must be rooted in empirical fact, not merely connected with it by an uncertain chain of conceptual links. I have advanced the view that the notion of *attitudes* at present best satisfies these conditions, and that it is these, rather than specific units of actual behaviour that provide the most suitable coinage for discussion and thought about the interview

'*Third* -In so far as preliminary inspection allows any valid division of processes within the interview to be made this lies between those of *stimulation* and *judgment* In other words, it is the task of the interviewer in the first place to *arouse* by conversational and other means *the display of attitudes* by the candidate and in the second place to *effect a judgment of the personal qualities* of the candidate upon this basis The actual process of arousing attitudes must usually be preceded and accompanied by manoeuvres devoted to restoring normal mobility of attitude to the candidate, who will have lost this in the setting of the interview These manoeuvres again are chiefly conversational in nature. The processes of observation and judgment are not to be analysed into a set of independent acts of cognition, coupled with a distinct process of forming judgments by logical means upon the basis of what is cognised. Already in the process of observation there is essentially involved the implicit form of judgment the existence of which brings about selection and organisation of the immediately given data. Adequate observation and sound judgment depend upon the proper cultivation of these pre-existing schemes of judgment. And this, in turn, depends in considerable measure upon the development of a communicable body of reliable

that type of interview which is concerned with the assessment of qualities of personality

Though the book is based on investigations conducted by the author on various aspects of interview he is not satisfied merely to record the results of his experiments without a searching enquiry into the underlying psychological facts. In his conclusions, the author has pointed out the shortcomings of psychological discussions and has urged the interviewers to try to perceive clearly the psychological implications and conditions of what comes to their notice.

The conclusions are indeed stimulating and emphasise the need for further investigation of these implications which will offer means by which one man s judgment of another might be placed if not on a surer at least on a more communicable, foundation.

AN ANALYSIS OF U P S. C. INTERVIEWS

by

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For many years of my life I have had to conduct interviews (either in connection with a general educational or academical qualification or with appointments to Services or the filling of specific posts in the course of which candidates had to be interviewed Broadly speaking, there are two different purposes which a interviewer sets before himself, and the method of examination differs according to the purpose. In one case the object is to test the range and the accuracy of the candidate s knowledge of a given subject. The procedure then is for the interview to follow the written examination; the examiner takes up the candidate s written answers and cross examines him on them. It is a most effective method of exposing the man who has only a superficial and shallow knowledge of the subject and tries to cover it up by pretentious phrases. I have seen the deadly effect of an interview in such cases.

I can recall the case of a candidate who made the statement that if he were responsible for India s finances he would reduce the military budget straight away When it came to the interview he was unable to tell me what the actual size of the Army in India was what were the various arms of which it was composed, and where he would make the reduction.

The second method is now the one more generally in use. It has no reference to the examiner's written answers. In fact oral examiner is different man from the one who examines the scripts, and the object in view is not to discover the candidate s knowledge of any particular subject, which is tested by means of written papers, but to ascertain his mental

his general knowledge and intelligence and the breadth of his outlook and to obtain an impression of his personality This is a harder test, both for the examiner and examinee and the possibilities of the examinee making a mistake are greater Also where the interview is conducted not only by a single examiner but by a Board as is now usually the case there is room for wide variation amongst the members composing the Board.

At interview time examiner has his trials as well as the examinee The examiner is of course generally speaking, more favourably situated. Sometimes when I put a question to the candidate which he could not answer the more venture some of that class have asked me what was my answer I could always get out of it by telling them that they were there to be examined, not *I*. It is however not wise for the examiner always to rely on the fact that he is the predominant partner in the concern.

I remember once at an Interview Board, one of my colleagues put a spirited young man who when asked what was his strong point, had answered that it was English Literature, a series of questions which had no bearing on his favourite subject. He was called upon to tell the quantity in inches of the rainfall in the capital of the province from which he came then the total figures of the provincial Government s budget, the amount of revenue derived from the taxation on land and the strength of the police force. The young man had to confess ignorance on every one of these. I could see his temper rising. The last straw was when he was asked what was the most direct route of railway which would take him from Allahabad which was the scene of the examination, to Karachi. He replied If ever I have the misfortune to have to go from Allahabad to Karachi I should consult the railway guide The candidate was passed on to the next member of the Board.

I have not come across the specimen of the impudent examinee who makes up for his lack of knowledge by his self

assurance I have however heard the story of a candidate who was asked at a medical interview what he would do if a man was blown up by gun-powder I should wait till he came down, was the answer The next question was What muscles would I put in motion if I knocked you down for so impertinent an answer? The candidate, cool in his assurance, replied: 'The muscles of my arm for I should knock you down in turn.

The opposite type of candidate who tries to ingratiate himself into the examiner's good grace by appealing to his vanity is also uncommon There is, however the well known story of the bright lad, a candidate for the Navy who was being interviewed by a Board of Naval officers presided over by a full-blown Admiral One of the questions put to him was to name the six most famous Admirals in English history He duly mentioned Drake, Raleigh, Blake Nelson and Vincent and for the sixth name he turned to the member of the Board nearest to him and said I forget the name of the Chairman of this Board. Could you kindly tell me because he is the sixth

The trials of the examinee are naturally larger than those of the examiner but there is always the humorous side of an interview board endowed with a gift of humour can do to put the candidates at ease and create an atmosphere in which the best can be drawn out of them. I recall the case of the young man who was asked which was his favourite daily newspaper He named a well known journal circulating in Northern India. In order to discover his interests he was asked what was the first thing he turned to when he opened his paper—was it the foreign telegrams or the Indian news or the leading articles? The unexpected reply came: 'The advertisement.

There was then the candidate who had made a special study of political science He was questioned as to why when, Cabinets were being formed in England, often the gentleman chosen for the War Office was one who had probably never

handled a gun in his life and the gentleman selected to be the Secretary of State for India had probably never been in India. The answer was that it was an ingenious device meant to keep the real power in the hands of the permanent officials If the Minister had first-hand knowledge of this subject he would act off his own bat !

A third candidate was the son of a Minister in the United Provinces He was asked what career he would take up if he did not get nto the service for which he was being examined. He said he would stand for election to the local legislative council. The next question was What party would you join ? The frank answer was It all depends on the party prospects at the time. I shall join that party which is likely to command the majority in the Council.

There are, of course the cases of the unsophisticated youngmen who return an answer in pure ignorance. Geography is often a stumbling block and I gathered at a recent visit to educational institutions in England that the subject is no more popular there than it is in India I asked a candidate for one of the all India Services what Pusa was noted for He answered 'For its leaning tower' an answer which, though incorrect at the time, was justified five years later by the great Bihar earth quake.

Another was asked to say what isobars were He thought for a few minutes and then the English habit of making a compound word out of the first syllable of one name and the last syllable of another name exemplified in the contraction of the Montague-Chelmsford Report into the Montford Report' suggested to him the answer Large masses of ice from the Polar region, drifting to the Nicobar Islands. It is needless to remind the intelligent reader that isobar lines on a map of the world are lines denoting equal degrees of atmospheric pressure